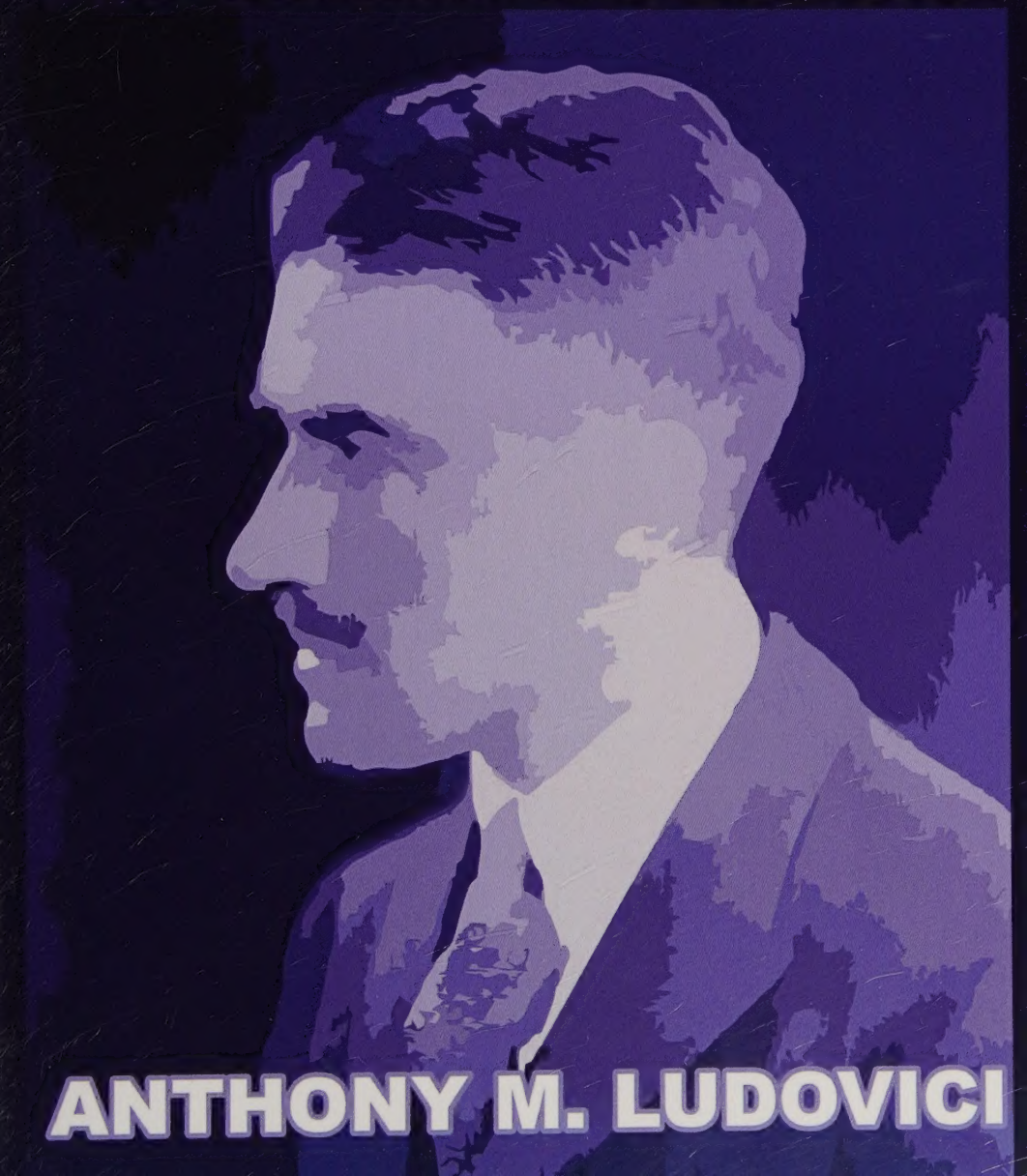
THE SPECIOUS ORIGINS OF LIBERALISM

The Genesis of a Delusion



ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI

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The Genesis of a Delusion

Anthony M. Ludovici

Ostara Publications

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The Genesis of a Delusion
By Anthony M. Ludovici

First published 1967
This edition 2015
Ostara Publications
http://ostarapublications.com
ISBN 978-1507826287

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Anthony M. Ludovici: A Brief Biography

Anthony Mario Ludovici (1882–1971) was born in London, England. Educated privately, his high intelligence allowed him to become fluent in several languages, and he was a leading philosopher, sociologist, and author. His topics included art, metaphysics, politics, economics, religion, the differences between the sexes, race, and eugenics.

In addition, Ludovici was a talented artist, and gained employment as a painter and book illustrator. He was also—briefly—private secretary to the famous French sculptor Auguste Rodin. Eventually he wrote full-time, producing over 40 books and translating 60 others.

Completely fluent in German, Ludovici spent several years in Germany where he studied Friedrich Nietzsche's writings. Heavily influenced by that philosopher, Ludovici began a series of lectures on the art, politics, religion, and the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, and eventually published these thoughts in three books, *Who is to be Master of the World?: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1909), *Nietzsche: His Life and His Works* (1910), and *Nietzsche and Art* (1911).

During the First World War, Ludovici served in the British Army, fighting at the front line at Armentières and the Somme. He was then transferred to the Intelligence Staff at the War Office, where he quickly rose to become head of his department (MI6 A). He was awarded an Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his service.

His writings became increasingly racial in worldview, and he became an avid proponent of eugenics and the study of racial differences.

He also wrote extensively on the Jewish Question, publishing his most famous work, *Jews, and the Jews in England,* under a pen name (Cobbett) in 1938.

During the 1930s, Ludovici visited Germany frequently, and met personally with Hitler and other leading National Socialist figures. By 1939, he had joined The Right Club, a group of conservatives created by the Scottish Unionist Member of Parliament Archibald Ramsay, which was focused on exposing Jewish control of the Conservative Party.

When the Second World War broke out, Ludovici was dismissed from his intelligence work, arrested, and had his house raided by the British police. After nearly three weeks in detention, he was released in October 1940. His public association with The Right Club resulted in his ostracism from mainstream publishing, and he spent the remainder of his life in semi-retirement, writing occasionally for nationalist journals around the world.

Preface

"To believe in democracy, you must believe in the essential goodness of common humanity."

F. M. Cornford

Among the many remarkable changes witnessed in my lifetime, none has struck me more forcibly than that which has occurred in the relative importance of Religion and Politics. For, whereas in my childhood and youth religion was still the principal field where fervour and fanaticism reigned, it has been my fate to see political doctrines and ideologies completely supersede it in all adult minds.

It is as if the decline in religious Faith which has accompanied the spread of education and enlightenment, by preventing mankind from gratifying its need of some absorbing belief, had avenged itself by seizing on politics as an alternative field in which to exercise the human susceptibility to fanaticism.

Nor is the word "Fanaticism" inapt in this connection. For if it suggests the inclination stubbornly to believe in tenets and principles the validity of which is more assumed than proved, no more appropriate term could be found for the way in which many of the political persuasions struggling for supremacy in the modern world are now both held and advocated. But of none of these political persuasions is the term "fanatical" more deserving than Liberalism; for in this modern surrogate for a religious creed, there is so much which only blind faith could accept, and above all, in the passionate devotion of its supporters, there is so much intolerance and impatience displayed towards the holders of other political beliefs, that the parallel with the attitude of the Mediaeval Church, when in the heyday of its power, is conspicuous.

In my youth there was certainly hostility and rivalry between Liberals and Conservatives; but however bitter the antagonism, it never went to the length of branding the other side as "indecent", "disreputable" or actually "despicable". Yet to-day Liberalism has attained to this height of arrogance and presumption. With its command of most of the channels of publicity — again like the Mediaeval Church — it has succeeded in so convincing people all over the habitable globe that

the doctrine of Liberalism is alone orthodox and excellent that in the popular mind he who disputes the Liberal Maxims is regarded as little less than a criminal.

Words such as "Fascist", "Nazi", "Reactionary", and even "Tory", have acquired pejorative meanings which are beginning to associate them with guilt and shame. So that they imply as much infamy as the words "Heretic", "Free-thinker" and "Blasphemer" did in the days of Luther and Melanchthon. And to see Politics of the Liberal stamp assuming this over-weening and insolent attitude is all the more surprising seeing that the tenets and principles on which its Faith is founded, are as incapable of surviving a narrow and searching scrutiny as are the crudest superstitions of primitive savagery.

This book is therefore an attempt in this eleventh hour of expiring sanity to expose (he false assumptions and truculent vacuity of these very tenets and principles, and to outline a constructive means of combating them. It consists of twenty-nine chapters which approximately coincide with articles on *The Specious Origins of Liberalism* contributed to *The South African Observer* between March 1961 and January, 1963, together with slight additions drawn from a series on *The Importance of Racial Integrity* published in the same journal some years earlier.

The idea of reproducing these articles in a book came originally from various readers of *The South African Observer* who wished to possess them in a permanent form; but I have to thank the Editor of the journal in question, Mr. S. E. D. Brown of Pretoria for kindly permitting me to meet his readers' wishes.

ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI
Ipswich, Autumn 1966

I: Aristocracy and the Mob

From the dawn of social life men have recognised that communal existence is permanently in need of regulation and that, if it is not to be disruptive of good order, human behaviour cannot be left to the uncontrolled direction of natural passion and instinct.

The native iniquity of Man — his cupidity, aggressiveness, sadistic impulses and lust — inevitably taught all human groups that social survival was feasible only if some curb was placed on many of mankind's natural characteristics. This was always a pressing necessity. But to-day, when added to Man's natural iniquity, the general state of civilised mankind — their prevalent sickness both mental and physical — has aggravated rather than diminished their evil potentialities (for even if the sick and neurotic are not intentionally malicious, their reactions and impulses cannot always be properly controlled and their taste, judgment and influence, can hardly be wholesome), the need of restraint, of discipline, and of a good example set by a sane healthy and wise *élite*, is more than ever necessary.

For this reason, Man's most urgent and everlasting problem must always have been, and still is, to find and establish an Authority which can lend acceptable compelling power to the rules by which he governs his society. Originally, men were doubtless assisted in this quest by the natural inequality of gifts and capabilities recognisable among them, and whenever no arbitrary imposition of rulership through conquest occurred differences in individual endowment, in mental and physical attributes, must usually have determined the identity of rulers and ruled.

The readiness of all men in situations of emergency or simple need to defer to their superiors in strength, whether of body or mind, and willingly to profit from a fellow man's greater resourcefulness, perspicacity, inventiveness, mere dexterity, observational powers, or what not, must inevitably have induced must societies, however primitive, and even against the will of the least discriminating, to acknowledge and raise to Authority those among their members whom it was to the general advantage to follow and obey.

To this day, one has only to live long enough in any close community like a hamlet or village, in order to discover how impossible it is to conceal under a bushel any light one may be able to emit. Neighbours will soon become aware of it and in due course importune one with their wish to turn it to their own account. And when this occurs, they will display a surprising amount of humility and subservience in accepting advice and even commands which, in the ordinary way, they would have regarded as overbearing.

When, therefore, Herbert Spencer maintained that "The desire to command is essentially a barbarous desire. Whether seen in the ukase of a Czar, or in the order of an Eton bully to his fag, it is alike significant of brutality. Command cannot be otherwise than savage for it implies an appeal to force should force be needful. . . . Command is the growl of coercion crouching in ambush. It is inconsistent with the first law of morality. It is radically wrong." (H. Spencer: *Social Statics*, Chap. XVI, 5); — when I say, Spencer penned these words he was writing nonsense.

He was forgetting all the more generous and beneficent features of command, whether in guidance, education, or protection, and we have only to compare his words with Aristotle's on the same subject in order to appreciate how little political thought advanced in the two millenniums separating him from the Greek philosopher.

From the very examples with which Spencer illustrated his doctrine, it is however evident that he was prompted more by emotion than by thought when he propounded it. Why, for instance, does he speak of the "*desire* to command" and refer us to the ukase of a Czar and the order of an Eton bully to his fag, as if the act of commanding necessarily issued from a secret urge to dominate and oppress? We know that in the minds of most Liberals this is precisely what it does always mean. But the belief has no foundation.

"It is natural," said Aristotle, "that some beings command and others obey, that each may obtain mutual safety." (*Politics*, II, Bk. I, Chap. II, 1252a).

This makes the superficiality of Spencer's dictum immediately obvious. For it is precisely in connection with "mutual safety" that command often plays its vitally important rôle in human relations, above all in politics.

We have but to think of the Alpine guide whose commands, if disobeyed, may spell disaster for both his charges and himself. Nor do we need unduly to strain our imaginations in order to picture scores

of possible situations in which the command of a superior, whether in knowledge, experience or skill, may be a means of salvation to him who is commanded.

Besides, it is hardly possible to lead without actually voicing or implying the two words of command, which the Forsaken Merman in Matthew Arnold's poem cries to his bereaved offspring.

"Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way! . . .
Call her once more and come away;
This way, this way!"

As Dr. Franz Boas aptly remarks. "The assumption that all leadership is an aberration from the primitive nature of man and an expression of individual lust for power cannot be maintained." (*Anthropology and Modern Life*, 1929, Chap. IX).

Naturally, the Authority recognised as imparting acceptable power to the government of a community will vary according to the level of civilisation it has reached. In some groups, superiority in physical strength, or in the use of offensive weapons, or in mere speed and agility, will confer the right to command. In others, superior skill in craftsmanship, intelligence or merely good observational powers will suffice. Possessors of the latter quality, for instance, might acquire leadership owing to their ability to foretell weather changes. In yet others, powers of divination and of intuition in the elementary principles of therapeutics and dietetics, or even mere seniority, would establish the authority to command.

Only when the particular form of superiority wanes, does the athority deriving from it tend to lapse. Hence, for instance, the custom among such people as the African Dinka and Shilluk to kill their chiefs at the first sign of weakness.

But it is important to note that this summary suppression of a chief does not necessarily mean that the rest of the community thereupon automatically assume his authority and wield his power; but merely that a new chief is appointed. At all events, in the life of most communities, it is at the moment when their ruling body fails or falls that the task arises of finding a successor who can enforce the traditional, if not actually improvise fresh, forms of Law and Order. And in the civilised societies of the Western World, this task has arisen no less regularly than in more primitive communities.

When, however, in these more advanced societies, the degeneration or extinction of their hitherto acknowledged rulers has left the seat of Authority vacant, the difficulty of finding a new occupant for it, by being commensurate with the greater complexity of the stage of development reached, has often confronted the community with a problem which they have been unable to solve with either sagacity or caution.

Admittedly the difficulty has always been serious and, owing to the urgent need of quickly filling the vacancy in question, the time allowed for solving the problem has usually been short. This may partly explain how and why the sort of solution reached in crises of this sort has, in advanced societies, often been inadequately pondered, faulty and palpably makeshift.

What has chiefly marked the speculations and cogitations of Europeans, faced with the problem of finding a suitable successor to their discredited and deposed rulers, has been their constant failure to investigate the basic causes of the deterioration in ability and general quality which brought about the downfall of their whilom rulers. In consequence, they were never able to devise such reforms in the production, preservation and control of their *élites* as would have prevented a recurrence of decay. Even among the deposed rulers themselves, whether royal or aristocratic, no effort was made to discover what avoidable errors had occurred in their way of life, their training and particularly in their marriages, which had prevented them from preserving their quality unimpaired.

Thus the procedure common to most advanced European communities of the past, faced with the situation resulting from the deposition of their former rulers, has been, not to attempt any chastening or improvement of the institutions on which their government depended, but the summary abolition of these institutions, followed by a gradual elevation to power and authority of ever more and more of those elements in the population who theretofore had composed the ruled. And this elevation took place without much attention being given to the question of quality. Ever wider and wider circles of ordinary people were granted the light, through their elected representatives, to control the life and law of the nation, irrespective of any stake they might have in the land, or of any public spirit, mental soundness, stability or political qualifications they might possess.

The process which finally culminated in complete Popular Government was, at least in England, a long and arduous one; but it

was at all events never delayed or obstructed by any attempt to discover an alternative form of government less obviously makeshift and gratuitous. It is true that the class of politicians who functioned as the Parliamentary representatives of the People, started by being, unlike the Lords spiritual and temporal, only *elected* and not *summoned* counsellors of the King, and that originally therefore their rôle was less dignified and less important than that of the Lords. But gradually this state of affairs was reversed, and when once kings and nobles ceased from being paramount in the legislature, the electorate who placed the members of the Commons in Parliament became the virtual rulers of the land.

Needless to say, there were many fierce political struggles before this final stage was reached. But, in the first decades of the twentieth century, Universal adult Suffrage placed all men and women in a position thus to control the national destiny. The main features of the process culminating in the supersession of the common people over their former rulers were, first, the downfall of Kingship as an institution involving the rule of sovereigns possessed of supreme executive power and their replacement by what has come to be known as "Constitutional or Limited Monarchy"; secondly the decline and overthrow of Aristocracy as an institution resting on a class of hereditary rulers who ideally consisted of the "Best" in the community, and thirdly the usurpation by the elected of the people — the Commons — of all ruling power, including that of modifying the Constitution, of making and unmaking laws, and, through the control of taxation, of even passing discriminatory legislation aimed at easing the universal modern ache of Envy.

Although a confirmed Liberal, John Stuart Mill perceived that discriminatory legislation was one of the dangers of Popular Government resting on Universal Suffrage. He feared that it would inevitably tend to encourage demagogy and promote the practice among Parliamentary candidates of making lavish promises of public benefits to their prospective constituents.

For this reason he was strongly in favour of extending direct taxation even to the poorest in the community, so that they could be made to feel part at least of the burdens imposed on other classes of the nation by laws imposing compulsory charity. Indirect taxation, he thought, was not enough because, not being "visible", it is "hardly felt." (*Representative Government*, 1861, Chap. VIII). Whilst Herbert Spencer, anticipating the sort of tyrannies likely to result from

Universal Suffrage, maintained that just as Liberalism had put "a limit to the powers of kings", the future function of "true Liberalism would be that of putting a limit to the Powers of Parliaments." (H. Spencer: *Man Versus the State*, The Great Political Superstitions).

But, as I have already pointed out, the gradual transition from true Kingship (i.e. the rule by kings possessed of supreme executive power and not its modern travesty, "Limited" or "Constitutional Monarchy"), and true Aristocracy, to Popular Government based on Universal Suffrage, followed a course never once interrupted by any attempt to discover any wiser alternative, or to devise means of correcting and in future avoiding the errors that had led to the downfall of royal and aristocratic rule, so that these could be restored and preserved.

It is as if a spirit of settled pessimism, peculiar to political speculation in particular, had generally prevented remedial measures from taking precedence of drastic and total abrogation. Thus, wherever we look in European History, we find more or less the same sequence of events:— Monarchy making way for Aristocracy; Aristocracy superseded by Democracy, and Democracy inevitably culminating in Ochlocracy and Anarchy. And at each stage, there is the same failure to investigate the causes of the collapse of the previous régime and the same omission to devise methods of preventing similar collapses in the future.

When, for instance, coupled with the complete disregard of the essentials of a wise marriage and sound hereditary conditions, we find the dangerous practice of primogeniture observed in all Western monarchies and noble families, how can we wonder at the repeated failure of Royal and Aristocratic families to preserve their quality? The least intelligent farmer could see at a glance that under such conditions it would be utterly impossible to maintain the qualities of a stock or family line for any length of time.

And the fact that the repeated failure of Monarchy by Divine Right ultimately led the most simple-minded, even in a religious Age, to look on this source of Authority as a baseless superstition, sufficiently illustrates the revulsion of feeling to which incompetence, misconduct and inadequate endowment in high places can lead. Nor is the case of Aristocracy very different. For the ultimate loss of all magic and majesty from the notion of hereditary rule, was due, not as mankind tended almost everywhere in Europe to assume, to a mistaken belief in the hereditary transmission of traits and to the inherent shortcomings of the institution of Aristocracy per se, but to the very selfsame vices which repeatedly caused the collapse of monarchical efficiency and

competence, plus the total lack of any disciplinary organisation within the aristocracy itself, which could enforce a certain minimum of good behaviour and competence among its members.

But, from the moment when the belief in a supreme ruler's Divine Right began to be regarded as no better than a savage's worship of his idol, and the prescriptive Right of the Best to lead and govern the common people came to be looked upon as a superstition accepted only by snobs and toadies, the whole problem of governmental Authority was inevitably returned to the melting pot, and the source of Authority, instead of being located in the Annointed of the Deity, or (in the case of the Aristocrats) in an *élite* possessed of superior hereditary qualities and rigidly disciplined by their own vigilants, had to be placed elsewhere.

But where? — That was the problem with which modern Europeans have wrestled ever since the first sign of collapse began to appear in their ruling classes.

Above I may have led the reader to understand that the substitution of Popular for Monarchical and Aristocratic government, although a slow process, was made by modern Europeans as it were "off their own bat" without any hint or help from other sources. But this is not so; for the deliberations, mostly unintelligent and shallow, which preceded the gradual adoption of Popular institutions, were in Western Europe unfortunately bedevilled from the start by the knowledge the more scholarly elements in the population possessed of the solutions reached by two of the most important States of antiquity when faced by precisely the same problems as confronted modern States bereft of their kings and nobles.

For this reason it may be said that Western European political expedients were never original, but always influenced by the powerful example of ancient Greece and Rome. Wherever there happened to be classical erudition, the history of these two great nations of antiquity and their political innovations were well known, and many documents recording the shifts to which they were reduced after their kings and nobles failed them, had not only survived but were also familiar to scholars throughout Christendom.

Thus, unfortunately for Western Europe, the problem of finding an acceptable Authority for government when former rulers had been deposed was never studied by minds free from prepossessions. For the knowledge of what Greece and Rome had done gave a fatal twist to political speculation and offered the indolent minds of the Age a

temptingly speedy and ready-made solution of a riddle bristling with difficulties.

While the time factor prevented any attempt to examine and mend the errors of their late rulers with a view to preserving the political institutions these had mismanaged, it also discouraged men from exploring possible solutions of their problem, free from the influence of ancient Greece and Rome. Modern nations therefore tended to take the sagacity of the two greatest peoples of antiquity for granted and consequently grafted on to their own ancient tribal usages the essentials of Graeco-Roman polity.

It never seemed to occur to them that in thus allowing themselves to be carried away by the crude political improvisations of peoples as remote and relatively primitive as the ancient Greeks and Romans, they were arbitrarily handpicking from a scrap-heap of miscellaneous and exploded superstitions one or two belonging to the realm of politics, which, for no satisfactory reason, except haste and sterility of invention, they assumed to be less puerile than the rest.

They overlooked the fact that the political expedients they were adopting were the improvisations of the very same people who cherished and practised any number of grotesquely irrational rites and ceremonies which were hardly indicative of sound judgment, let alone wisdom.

They were allowing themselves to be impressed by the political forms of two peoples who believed implicitly in Genethliogy (the influence of the planets on human destiny and on the aetiology of disease); in Haruspication (the art of foretelling events by examining animal entrails); and above all in hepatoscopy (divination by means of scrutinizing the livers of the sacrificial animals). For the ancient Greeks and Romans were so deeply convinced that the liver was the seat of the soul that, throughout antiquity, they allotted to this organ the major rôle in that form of divination confined to the inspection of animal viscera.

Nor were these the only forms of occult prevision and divination — at least among the ancient Greeks — for a plundered and baffled householder of Hellenic times would think nothing of dashing up to the Oracle of Dodona and asking it to reveal the whereabouts of the few cushions stolen from his house the day before.

If moreover, we turn from primitive superstitions such as these, to consider the philosophical ideas for which the ancient Greeks and Romans were responsible, it is difficult to deny that many of the

most disastrous mistakes of Western Civilisation are to be ascribed to the conclusions which these two ancient peoples bequeathed to us concerning the nature of Man and the Universe. (See on this point Part 1, Chap. VII of my *Religion for Infidels*.)

Confidently, however, as modern Europeans accepted many of these unsound Graeco-Roman philosophical ideas, their gullibility reached its apogee when they appropriated lock, stock and barrel, the shoddy political improvisations for which Athens and Rome became famous.

Overlooking the minor modifications by means of which we adapted Greek and Roman political systems to our own national needs and character, what chiefly marked our slavish sequacity was our adoption without any reservation whatsoever of their superstition concerning mob-majority voting and its prescriptive Right to Prevail.

Although the untoward consequences of this superstition might easily have been foreseen from the start, let alone discerned in the histories of its original founders, if was only after its adoption that practice revealed its grave defects even to the meanest intelligences among the advocates of Democracy in modern Europe. For it soon transpired that the principal insuperable difficulty of the system was its implicit assumption that Authority could hold sway without Responsibility.

How this self-evident fact about Democracy escaped the notice of political philosophers in Western Europe is hardly comprehensible. For the most hopeless political moron might be expected to see instantly that a legislative assembly owing its existence to a mob majority vote can have no independent status. It is only one remove from the crowd, and a crowd has no identity.

When it errs it cannot be brought to book, dismissed, deposed or punished. No matter how treacherously or catastrophically its votes may be used, it cannot be shot. Even if it were proposed to penalise a majority known to have used their Divine Right of prevailing (*Vox populi vox Dei*, or as some wag once put it, "*Vox populi vox idiocy*") in a manner calamitous for the nation, how would one identify the culprits? Even before the institution of the Ballot, whether in Rome or England, this was difficult enough. But, with the Ballot, which by-the-by that great Liberal, John Stuart Mill, heartily condemned, it became quite impossible.

Habit and convention so insidiously create instinctive feeling and convince us of the self-evidence and natural necessity of our national usages, however odd, that there must now be few Westerners who

entertain the slightest doubt about the wisdom of governing a country by means of mob-majority voting. To most moderns the system seems to belong to the order of Nature, like the revolution of the Earth about its axis. Least of all can women, who form more than half of the electorate in England, be expected to question the sanity of mob-majority voting, seeing that they fought like maenads to secure their Right to this man-invented form of Ersatz-Rulership.

Yet, only the spiritual heirs of the ancient Greeks and Romans appear to have fallen victims to this fantastic superstition, and it was chiefly owing to the respect and envy their colossal wealth and prodigious technological achievements had inspired that they succeeded in infecting the rest of the world with it.

It is true that many Western countries have by now found it unworkable and in recent years have established thinly-veiled dictatorships in its stead; whilst in the native African States conjured into being by England and America, enough mother-wit has already been displayed by their coloured rulers to spare their peoples the rigours of a democracy *à l'Anglaise*. In Uganda, where the populace obtained the Vote in the Autumn of 1963, even the common natives have shown enough good sense to scorn mob majority voting as a political substitute for genuine rulership, and in Kampala and Jinga hardly any of the people could be got to register their names on the electoral rolls.

A shining example of this attitude is Ghana where, to the horror of a typical "Votes-for-Women" enthusiast like Lady Violet Bonham Carter (B.B.C.: *Any Questions*, 1.5.64), a ruler like Nkrumah has shown that he at least has not been hoaxed by Graeco-Roman and Anglo-Saxon political Brummagen. This shows that, when free from the cloud-cuckoo principles of Lockian and Benthamite political philosophy (if it deserves so dignified a name!), the human brain does not yield kindly to a belief in the infallibility of a mere preponderance of human flesh and bones.

It can, therefore, hardly sunrise us that at least three of the most highly intelligent of civilised people were able to survive the evanescence of their monarchies and aristocracies without ever having once imagined that mob majority voting could adequately replace Kingship or the Rule of the Best. I refer to the ancient Jews, the Hindus and the Chinese, all of whom displayed political sagacity unparalleled by Europeans. Nor was it until the trio in question became inextricably entangled with the people of the West and their political sophistries,

that any of them abandoned their instinctive distrust of irresponsible Popular Government.

Theretofore, all three of them had been content to wait, even in bad times, until scions of their own flesh and blood could arise possessed of the endowments entitling them to assume the leadership of the nation.

In the case of the ancient Jews, during the anarchy of the later years of their monarchy and thereafter, it was the inspired prophets who, from time to time, by reviving respect and patriotic fervour for the spiritual heritage of the race, and by rekindling loyalty and the passion for national unity, contrived to restore Law and Order on the basis of the Torah, and to restate the standards which alone could be expected to lead to a good way of life.

First Haggar, then Zechariah appeared to infuse fresh life and confidence into their people's wilting spirits. And although in 557 B.C. Jerusalem was a heap of ruins and the whole of the surrounding country was devastated, these two prophets reorganised the nation, induced their people to undertake the formidable task of rebuilding the Temple, and by 524 B.C. a resurrected nation witnessed the solemn consecration of the new structure.

Again, when there was a renewed outbreak of disorder and anarchy, it was Ezra who, in 459 B.C., in the square outside the Temple, exhorted the people to mend their ways and to cease imperilling the preservation of their national type and character by mingling their blood with that of strange peoples. And such was the compelling passion of his appeal that his listeners came forward and themselves promptly proposed to dissolve their mixed marriages.

These drastic measures, however, together with the social aloofness to which they inevitably led, incensed the surrounding non-Jewish races who, feeling themselves affronted and despised, opened war. Jerusalem was once more assaulted; its walls demolished, its gates burned down, and the invaders "did as they pleased in the city." Everything seemed once more to be hopelessly lost.

But yet again salvation was forthcoming; this time in the person of Nehemiah who, reaching Jerusalem from Persian Babylonia in 445 B.C., caused the city to be rebuilt, gave the community a constitution based on the Torah, restored the rules against miscegenation and then, believing the people satisfactorily settled and secure, after twelve years of vigilant activity, returned to Persia.

He was, however, mistaken. Not long had his back been turned before chaos and anarchy reigned once more, and he was forced to

return and to apply his rules against mixed marriages with even greater rigour than he had exercised on the previous occasion. Indeed, he actually went so far as narrowly to scrutinise the register of births and to expel from the community even Aaronite families whose ancestry could not pass muster.

After forcibly dissolving all mixed marriages contracted in his absence, he made every infringement of the law against such unions punishable; and, among the people who volunteered to return to the city, he refused entry to all who failed to establish the undisputed purity of their stock.

Now, it is important to note that, throughout this whole history of unrest and disorder — i.e. in the hundred years or so between 557 and 430 B.C. — not once did any Jew think of resorting to the expedient of mob majority voting as an "*ersatz*" for competent and skilful leadership and government during those intervals when the community was destitute of accredited guides and guardians. And if for a moment we pause to ask what would have been most likely to happen had such a step been taken, can there be any possible doubt about the answer?

— Surely, with the most complete confidence we may reply that had the Jewish mob been called upon to vote — especially at the time when their neighbours were becoming so much incensed by the aloofness Ezra had ordained — the majority among them, in order to ease their heart-ache, would, in keeping with the sentimentality of crowds and their fondness for the line of least resistance, undoubtedly have favoured the course of yielding to the protestations of their affronted neighbours, of recognising the "heartlessness" of "racial discrimination", and of softly countenancing once again the practice of unrestricted mixed marriages.

And, had they done so, what would have been the result? — Undoubtedly, it would have meant that all the precious racial qualities of the Jews, sedulously cultivated and garnered through the Ages, would have been adulterated, diluted, weakened and squandered. For crowds are always soft-hearted and lachrymose, ever ready to take the easiest way out of a jam, and never capable of taking a long-term view of any measure involving restraint and discipline.

All honour to the leaders of the ancient Jews for having scorned the vulgar expedient of mob-majority voting. To them Jewish posterity has been indebted for any distinctive triumphs that were to mark the history of their race in the modern world, and for all the feats, whether in Science or Philosophy, which can be ascribed to Jewish genius.

As regards the Hindus, their King usually hailed from the Warrior or Kshatrya Caste; but he reigned under Brahmin supervision and had a relatively restricted authority. Usually unencumbered by the detrimental rule of primogeniture, the royal line provided a succession of administrative specialists most carefully trained and expertly advised. By this means the throne was securely maintained for centuries, and the one aim of the leading men of the nation was, not how to find and provide a satisfactory alternative to kingship, but how to make the occupant of the throne as capable and efficient a ruler as possible. Hence, apart from occasional spells of minor unrest, the monarchy lasted for 927 years, i.e. from the reign of Chandragupta to that of Harshavardhava (521 B.C. to A.D. 648). Throughout almost the whole of this period, the sovereign was supported by selected members of the ruling caste — the Brahmins whose principles fitted them admirably for the exercise of this influence without prompting them to entertain any accompanying desire for power. As Mr. Parkinson observes: "they could restrain royal power without ever wishing to supersede it." (C. N. Parkinson: *The Evolution of Political Thought*, Chap. IV).

Buddhist counsellors also functioned under some of the kings and probably did so under Asoka (269 B.C.), "the greatest and noblest ruler India has known." (A. L. Basham: *The Wonder that was India*, Chap. III).

But what made the Brahmins particularly suitable as royal ministers was to a great extent the rule governing their lives; for they were expected to spend at least the last quarter of it as ascetic paupers, depending on charity alone. This meant that ancient Hindu society enjoyed the singular advantage of having a superior class that could command and obtain respect and exercise considerable influence without the vulgar pre-requisites thereof in our civilisation, which consists of ostentatious opulence and the capacity to display lavish and even wasteful expenditure; and without provoking the universal heart ache of our Western world, which is chronic envy.

At all events, during the whole of India's monarchical period there was never any suggestion of sinking the mob-majority voting as an alternative means of lending authority to governmental control. As Mr. Parkinson says: "Indian thought is not directed towards discovering alternative forms of rule but rather towards considering how to make monarchy effective." (*op. cit.*)

Nor, if we study the time-table of royal duties outlined in Kantalya's Arthasastra, do we find any reason to regard the kingly

office as a sinecure. For even if the schedule of duties was not always strictly followed, it reveals the monarchy as no refuge for sluggards, voluptuaries or hedonists. Nor was it ever allowed to degenerate into the purely ceremonial and sartorial histrionics of the many so-called "Monarchies" of modern Europe, in which as Disraeli maintained "the sceptre has become a pageant".

And this ancient Hindu kingdom not only produced a great culture, which reached its apogee under Chandragupta II (A.D. 375-415), but at the time of the Gupta Empire certainly also made "India perhaps the happiest and most civilised region of the world." (Basham: *op. cit.*). Sir George Dunbar sets the zenith slightly later — between the fifth and seventh centuries A.D. — but both authorities agree about its splendour. Even in Science, the achievements of this ancient Hindu State were by no means negligible (See *History of India* by Sir G. Dunbar, 1936, Chap. III). But what chiefly concerns us is that in good times as in bad, never once did the leaders of the Hindu people think of resorting to mob-majority voting as a means of governing the country.

Much of what has been said of the ancient Jews and Hindus applies also to the people of China. And in this matter we should not allow ourselves to be misled by the loose terminology often to be found in even expert accounts of Chinese manners and customs.

Every student of Chinese history must have come across statements made by reputable sinologues, which indicate that throughout her long existence China has tended to favour the sort of mob-majority rule now prevailing in modern France and England (though less virulent perhaps in France since de Gaulle mitigated its worst follies). But this impression is false and results from a misuse of the term "democratic" by many authorities.

We find Professor H. A. Giles, for instance, describing the Chinese government as having always been "an irresponsible autocracy democratic in operation." (*The Civilisation of China*, 1911, Chap II). Yet by this he means no more than that the régime sometimes tolerated certain liberal features found in democratic societies, but not invariably. I refer to the absence of class distinctions, the horror of injustice, and "*la carrière ouverte aux talents.*"

The fact that the absence of class distinctions is not an essential feature of democracies, is illustrated by both modern England and France, where, despite all the rigours of an unlimited ochlocracy, class distinctions are still sharp and conspicuous. It is true that they are not based on different degrees of quality, but only on gradations

of wealth. For in both countries although all classes display perfect equality in their vulgarity, tastelessness, ostentation, ill-health and self-indulgence, there is nevertheless a rigid order of rank based on money, so that all but the richest are tormented by envy and all but the poorest enjoy the luxury of looking down on the less prosperous.

Moreover, these two great nations are in addition divided into two sharply differentiated groups which have long ceased to correspond to Heine's "two nations" — the rich and the poor (see *William Ratcliffe*, 1821, Scene 6. The idea was plagiarised 24 years later by Disraeli in *Sybil*), but which might now be described as the Blackmailed and the Blackmailers; the former constituting the less highly organised minority and depending on the latter for their public and other services and bearing the heaviest burdens of taxation; and the latter, the so-called "Workers", constituting the majority who, by periodically withholding their services and thereby creating intolerable inconvenience, levy blackmail on the former with a view to increasing their own incomes at the expense of the class blackmailed.

When, therefore, Professor Giles tells us that "China has always been at the highest rung of the democratic ladder." He is obviously misusing the word "democratic"; for none better than Professor Giles must have known that no government could have endured, as he says China's did, "nearly twenty-two centuries" if it had been truly democratic, (*op. cit.* Chap. XII).

Even Lin Yutang, in his able treatise, *My Country and My People* (1936, Epilogue, IV), is equally misleading. For, when he maintains that "the Chinese people are and always have been the most democratic, the most casteless, the most self-respecting" people, he is obviously enumerating only the least essential and least constant features of a truly democratic society. For what chiefly characterises such a society is that in it *demos* is the ultimate arbiter of all laws and policies.

As in the same book Lin Yutang tells us that "The Chinese religiously abstain from talking politics; they do not cast votes, and they have no clubhouse donates on politics" (Chap. 6. i) and that moreover he, as a Chinaman, "cannot accept democracy in the sense of Parliamentarism" (Epilogue, IV), he shows conclusively that, like Professor Giles, when he describes the Chinese as "democratic", he cannot mean what the West means by the term.

The very fact that China "is the country in which the old man is made to feel at ease" and that Lin Yutang is able to maintain that "the old man in China is a most imposing figure, more dignified and good to

look at than the old man in the West," and "that accounts for the poise and serenity of old age" (*op. cit.*), suffices to show that democracy can never have been agreeable to Chinese taste. For old men always compose the minority in every society; their experience constitutes for their juniors a source of wise counsels, and where the old and their judgment are thought negligible, not to say contemptible, as they are in the West, one may feel sure that the mania for mob-majority rule and snap judgments has taken possession of the populace and that complete anarchy is only round the corner.

II: Divine Right of Majorities

Thus, we know of three great peoples — the Jews, the ancient Hindus, and the Chinese — who lasted for centuries as patriarchal monarchies, or as political orphans repeatedly succoured and led only by their higher men, without once having in fair times or foul stooped to the alternative of mob-majority voting for their government. At no time did any of them take for granted what Westerners accept as a Law of Nature — that mob-majority judgments have a Divine Right to prevail. And everything points to the conclusion that, no matter how grave their political plight might have become, they would never have fallen to the intellectual level of a Rousseau or a Locke by conceding such a right.

Nor is it easy to think of any sound reasons which could have induced Western people to believe majority judgments as necessarily right. In a body of experts belonging to no matter what faculty, a majority judgment would have a prescriptive right to prevail because it would represent a greater weight of informed opinion.

But the only possible reason for accepting a majority's ruling when that majority consists of a heterogeneous epicene crowd, not qualified to form authoritative judgments on any matter whatsoever, is that if it chose to compel acceptance of its opinion, it could do so by sheer force. As Sheldon Moss acknowledged over seventy years ago, "The practice of deferring to a majority is simply that of giving way in time and by decent ceremonial to those who would have their own way if they chose to take it." (*The Science of Politics*, 1890, Chap. VI).

In other words, to claim that majorities should prevail is to accept the principle that Might is Right. They represent superior Might and we allow them to prevail so as to spare ourselves the pain of cracked skulls and other injuries if we had to fight it out.

As Edward Jenks maintained in 1902, "a fiction was gradually adopted by which we assumed that there had been a fight and that one party had gained the victory, and so it became the custom to settle the matter by counting heads instead of breaking them." (*A History of Politics*, p. 151).

The acceptance and support of majority rule by Liberals, can, therefore, only be due either to their imbecility which prevents them from recognising the odious principle on which it rests, or else to their perfidy, which enables them to condemn the practical application of this principle by others whilst claiming the right to apply it themselves. For they were always the first indignantly to denounce a German Kaiser, or an Italian or Teutonic Dictator who dared to act as if Might really were Right.

Besides, it is notorious that everywhere on Earth, the wise, intelligent, and discriminating members of the community always constitute the minority. So that Majority Rule must in any case mean Government by the least able and least gifted elements in every population. Can we wonder then, that whereever to-day Democracy is established things go from bad to worse and that chaos and anarchy are becoming universal?

But, if this really is so, the belief in the Divine Right of Majorities and in their unlimited authority is (as Spencer pointed out eighty years ago), even less rational and therefore less justified than the belief in the Divine Right of God-appointed kings; and as he says, turns out to be merely a political superstition even less consistent than the latter.

Thus, he concludes: "The assumed divine right of parliaments and the implied divine right of majorities are superstitions." (*Man versus The State*, 1884, Chap. V: The Great Political Superstition).

Even, however, as a pure superstition, the Divine Right or Kings is not quite as imbecile as the Divine Right of Majorities. For it is easy to imagine, and even to discover in world history, alleged "God-appointed" rulers with endowments far surpassing those of their leading subjects, and whose right to prevail was therefore consistent with a lofty code of spiritual values. But the Divine Right of Majorities can have no such justification. It is always nakedly materialistic and destitute of qualitative factors.

It is too often forgotten that the decree of power wielded by dominant personalities or groups that can command approval, is always commensurate with their quality, and that if it is to be gladly accepted, any increase in their power will always be contingent on a corresponding increase in their quality. There is no exception to this rule. Hence, as Aristotle maintained, "aristocracies are mostly destroyed . . . from virtue not being properly joined to power." (*Politics* II, Bk. V. Chap. VIII, 1307a). But how does one estimate the quality or virtue of an anonymous unidentifiable voting mob? If Lord Vansittart

was right when in 1958 he wrote of the political happenings to date: "Our elections have become auctions, where the best bidder won" (*The Mist Procession*, Chap. 10), we have a picture of an electorate moved only by self-interest and destitute of public spirit. Could any ruler, royal or aristocratic, similarly motivated, hope to retain his power? And yet, when given the opportunity to vote, how can an ill-informed, unqualified moo be expected to do otherwise than consult their own interests?

What other political criterion have they? The very spread of vandalism and of wanton destructiveness to-day, affecting chiefly public property, alone indicates that, when confronted by political issues, the populace is unlikely to be prompted by any public-spirited impulses; and the faulty psychology which assumed that they would be so prompted, is among the worst of the romantic errors committed by democratic political philosophy.

Thus, even if it be conceded that both royal and noble rulers often act as the electorate always do, at least they can be caught red-handed and deposed. But, as we have seen, no such treatment of a mob-majority can ever be possible. Their political crimes defy both detection and correction.

Very rarely, if ever, moreover, do political philosophers recognise that the value of mob-majority judgments is not only dependent on the knowledge and average intelligence possessed by a populace, important though such qualities undoubtedly may be, but also and above all on their quality as human organisms. And it is now more than ever important to take such factors into account in view of the enormous amount of morbidity that prevails in modern populations. The statistics showing the vast numbers of people annually hospitalised in our society, owing either to physical or mental illness, can leave us in no doubt that our present mobs, both high and low, display a formidably high incidence of subnormality and abnormality. In mental illness alone, as Captain S. W. Roskill, R.N. has pointed out, the situation is already disquieting. "Never", he says, "has mental illness been so common, and all the efforts of the psychiatrists and psychologists appear to do little to cure or mitigate it." (*The Art of Leadership*, Chap. IV).

Can there be anybody to-day sufficiently romantic and frivolous to suppose that, in these circumstances, the right of mob-majority judgments to prevail, can have any other than a detrimental effect on the way of life of the nation? There may be no choice at the

present moment — that is to say, we may have nowhere else to turn for governmental authority, than this ill-informed, unqualified mob, riddled with abnormalities of all kinds. But this should not mean that it would be hopeless to try to rear an *élite*, to replace that which we have lost. For, as Froude aptly remarked over ninety years ago, "The growth of popular institutions in a country originally governed by an aristocracy implies that the aristocracy is not any more a real aristocracy." (*Essay on Progress*). Or, as Nietzsche put it some years later, "What is best shall rule; what is best will rule! And where the teaching is different the best is lacking." (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*, 1882. III, xii, 21).

How then can we most wisely deal with the situation created by the lack of the best?

In any similar difficulty arising out of a deficiency in domestic or business-life, the obvious solution would be, first to discover the cause of the lack and then to seek the most effective means of remedying it. And this was more or less the policy adopted by the few wise civilisations the world has so far seen. But it is the very last to appeal to the essentially Liberal-minded, who, unaccountably lured by the primitive political improvisations of ancient Greece and Rome, misled by false psychological principles and obsessed by a mystical faith in the fundamental goodness of Man, fondly imagine that the enthronement of mobs can adequately and satisfactorily fill the gap caused by an empty throne and the evanescence of a national *élite*.

If ever a generation of men should arise, wiser and more wide awake than the present bunch representing our "Establishment", what will they think of an Age which was capable of solemnly building their political institutions on a belief in the Divine Right of Majorities, whilst at the same time looking down with scorn on people who could believe in the miraculous therapeutic effect of saintly relics and the magic of guardian angels?

Never to have thought of trying to mend what had been faulty in Kingship and Aristocracy, or of asking themselves whether these *régimes* had failed because of their shortcomings as institutions, or merely because of shortcomings in the men who had tried to run them; but pessimistically to have believed themselves competent and gifted enough to replace them by means of new-fangled and half-baked political substitutes of their own devising this was the fundamental error of Liberal thought from the beginning. And at bottom it was an error rooted in false psychology, compounded of over-weaning self-esteem.

For if they overlooked nothing else in connection with rulership, the Liberals certainly forgot that it included the enormously difficult task of setting a good Tone to the national life, and this it was soon found the vast majority of the people were unable to do.

As we shall see in the sequel, even prominent Liberals and ardent democrats have begun to appreciate this fatal flaw in their calculations, and have recently initiated a scheme for the restoration and rehabilitation of a properly qualified *élite*, at least in England.

The fact that in both England and France, but especially in the latter country, members of the fast declining *élite*, scions of the oldest and noblest families, as de Tocqueville and others have shown, often flirted with Liberal ideas and, long before the outbreak of the French Revolution, were shallow enough to see in their own loss of prestige and power, not any censure on their past conduct, but only evidence of the radical unsoundness of aristocracy as an institution, in no way invalidates the claims here made. For the stupid stammerings of a moribund are no argument in favour of what he defends, and mankind was doomed to learn by bitter experience alone the fallacies of the Liberal doctrine.

They were bound ultimately to discover that only the best of their species can by virtue of their instinctive good taste, sound judgment and wholesome example, act as safe life-guides to their contemporaries, and when the darkness and chaos of general anarchy at last becomes intolerable and Western mankind at the end of its tether seeks for a saviour, it may well be that it will find confirmed what Professor G. Catlin tentatively suggested some fifteen years ago.

"It may be", he said, "that science will show that only the man in health, of a good stock and nature, nurtured on a good diet physical and emotional, free from anxiety and with his natural confidence unbroken — the natural aristocrat — is capable of the highest excellence, mental and spiritual and of raising the level of civilisation itself." (*A History of the Political Philosophers*, Chap. III, 5).

III: The Liberal Prescription

Like the remedies applied in illness and disease, political expedients are nor necessarily good in themselves. Streptomycin and penicillin are not administered to a patient after he has recovered from the indisposition for which they were prescribed. Only when there has been mismanagement on the part of the medical attendant or the nursing staff does a therapeutic measure become an addiction.

Unfortunately in politics emergency measures applied in moments of distress or disorder, are often thought to be good for all time as if morphia injections should be continued when there has ceased to be any need for them, so that morphiomania results.

Outside Russia and her satellite States, Liberalism — the ideology now playing the leading rôle in World politics — is an example of the mistaken loyalty a succession of generations may display towards what originally was but a disagreeable drug resorted to at a time of political disruption.

This is not to say that nowhere have individual thinkers appeared who, from time to time have protested against this chronic addiction to a nostrum intended only to meet a temporary affliction. But, such men have been few and their thought has not tended to prevail.

What then was the political sickness for which Liberalism was chosen as the remedy? We shall answer this question in a moment; but, before we do so something must be said about the popular attitude to government in general.

One of the most revealing facts social life teaches is that no child, adolescent or adult believes in human equality. Be they ever so benighted and ignorant, all people are inclined to recognise superiority or inferiority in their fellow-creatures in regard to qualities easily discernible.

Just as one cannot conceal one's stature, so one cannot for long make a mystery of one's physical strength or weakness, skill or clumsiness, mental alertness or dullness, soundness of judgment or the reverse, etc. And, given any reason on the part of a man's associates for seeking or eschewing his help, their rough estimate of his qualifications will

usually suffice to make them importune him with their demands, or else to give him a wide berth.

If the besetting sin of indolence were alone operative here, it would be enough to account for this revealing devotion to the efficient, the gifted and the resourceful. But other passions co-operate — the joy of casting aside a baffling problem, of transferring to other shoulders a burden beyond one's strength. Who prefers independence when it promises only failure or defeat? Who withholds obedience from a command that solves a difficulty?

This is a factor in politics which our Lockes, Benthams and Mills were too prone to overlook. John Stuart Mill, for instance, the greatest philosopher of the Liberal School, rather like his contemporary Herbert Spencer, declared that "command and obedience are but unfortunate necessities of human life: society in equality is its normal state." (*The Subjection of Women*, Chap. II, Sec. 12).

This is untrue; for by "society in equality" Mill could only have meant a state in which all men were so absolutely alike that no difference of strength, stature, skill or sagacity existed among them, and no one could be helped, instructed or succoured by any superior endowment in his neighbour. But where was such a society to be found? And if found, how could it be described as "normal"? Thus the generalisation is as pointless as Rousseau's concerning the noble savage.

In the Introduction we saw how Aristotle's teaching on the nature of command excelled both Mill's and Spencer's. The question is psychological and to misunderstand it is to be lacking in psychological flair. Strangely enough, in the same book in which he commits the blunder about command, Mill acknowledged that "An Englishman is ignorant respecting human nature" (Chap. III, Sec. 4). Was the remark perhaps prompted by introspection?

But Aristotle too sometimes nodded; for in a rare access of superficiality he maintained that "man is naturally a political animal." (*Politics* II, Vol. I. 1253a). If by this he meant that men are naturally prone to demand a share in the direction of their communal life, it is untrue.

For the majority only wish to be left alone to deal with their own private concerns and to escape the obligation of public affairs. Especially is this true of the Anglo-Saxons, whose individualism, self-centredness and love of minding their own business are notorious; whilst at the present time, what with the motor-car and motor-cycle obsessions almost universal in Europe, and the wireless and T.V.

addictions ranking second as compulsion neuroses, politics, except as a quinquennial opportunity for extorting some personal benefit from their nation, hardly concerns the majority of people at all.

"The proportion of citizens who take a lively and constant interest in politics," said Lord Bryce, "is so small and likely to remain small, that the direction of affairs inevitably passes to the few." (Lord Bryce: *Modern Democracies*, Vol. II, Chap. LXXV); and thirty years later, Dr. E. Zweig maintained that "apart from a small minority, British workers are rarely politically minded." (*Labour, Life and Poverty*, Chap. XIII). J. A. Hobson, who disagreed with Aristotle, at least as concerns England, declared that "Save in a very small minority, there is no continuous interest in politics and therefore a lack of that 'eternal vigilance' rightly said to be the price of liberty" (*Democracy and a Changing Civilisation*, 1934, Chap VI). Later on in the book, he speaks of "the stupid indifference which normally prevails in the attitude of the majority of all classes towards the conduct of public affairs."

Dr. Harold Laski actually went so far as to deny the alleged "interest in politics", not merely of the English but of all men. (*Communism*, Chap. IV, Part IV). And, as for women, their rooted apathy if not phobia, towards politics is alleged by many publicists. "Women (in the mass that is)," says R. C. Ensor, "have no day-to-day interest in politics. They will not patronise a paper that obtrudes too much politics upon them." (*The Character of England*, 1947, Article: The Press). Only a John Stuart Mill, dominated by women unreconciled to their fate as females, could ever have believed anything else. Some eighty years before the publication of *The Subjection of Women*, if Walter Bagehot had said of his countrywomen, "they care fifty times more for a marriage than a ministry" (*The English Constitution*, No. 11). In their frenzied struggle for the male-invented political Vote, the Suffragettes had no conception of the unprintable sub-conscious motives that actuated them; but we fit may be sure that no objective interest in politics inspired their struggle.

If, however, English men and women were as politically minded as many imagine, is it likely that Winston Churchill in June 1948 would have felt it necessary to make the monstrous plea in the Commons that people who refused to vote should be prosecuted and fined? — No more tyrannical measure for penalising exceptional intelligence has ever been proposed.

Admittedly, large numbers of people will at every General Election be moved to vote for the candidate who promises to procure them the

greatest benefits; for, as Spencer wrote in 1891, "unless we suppose that men's natures will be suddenly exalted, we must conclude that the pursuit of private interests will sway the doings of all component classes in a socialistic society" (*From Freedom to Bondage*, forming the introduction to *A Plea for Liberty*). We may therefore confidently count on a transient passion for politics in a high proportion of the population once every five years. But, generally speaking, if by "an interest in politics" we understand a preoccupation with national government, confined, as Mill said it should be, to a sincere concern about the public good, it is no exaggeration to say that it is too scarce to play any considerable rôle in the conduct of national affairs.

At all events, the indifference to politics and the dislike of being bothered with such matters, briefly discussed in the foregoing section, is but the reverse of the medal already described as mankind's natural desire for leadership. Disinclined by nature to self-government and prone to lean on those who are willing to shoulder their civic burdens for them, men feel that it is more consonant with their happiness and serenity to be free from the *corvée* of conducting their national affairs.

And it is this widespread impatience of "self-determination" which has always provided the principle ballast to the ship of State under monarchies and aristocracies, lending them both stability and most of their *raison d'être*; for their ultimate overthrow in most countries has usually been due less to any deep-seated desire in the crowd for autonomy, than to the wanton and persistent abuse of their power by rulers unworthy of their position and its privileges. Given this steadying ballast contributed to all minority régimes by the crowd's natural reluctance to become self-governing, a Government had to be intolerable over a long period before the multitude could resolve to don the halter of Popular and Democratic institutions. And the fact that this impatience of autonomy is probably most acute in countries where individualism and independence are most rife, may account for the belief held by no less an authority than Professor Salvador Madariaga that "the people of England are easily led." (*Englishmen, Frenchmen and Spaniards*, p. 156).

It is again this same impatience of self-government that doubtless lends our present Parliamentary Government most of its stability. For if, in spite of its many obvious absurdities and anarchical trends, Anglo-Saxon Democracy continues to enjoy popular support in England and the United States, it is probably owing chiefly to the instinctive dislike most men feel of being bothered with politics, and their relief on being

able to shift the burden of their civic responsibilities on to the shoulders of a Parliamentary representative, however inadequately endowed.

It is essential therefore to bear in mind that the principles and aims of Liberal doctrine, with all its characteristic features consisting of mob majority voting, Representative Government and Universal Suffrage, were a final and desperate reaction to a protracted state of distress, a form of medicine improvised to meet a morbid but not a necessarily incurable condition — the loss of leaders, whether monarchical or aristocratic, who could be confidently followed and trusted; and that the fundamental mistake made by the political philosophers of the Liberal school has been to assume that the state of distress in question must be permanent because the shortcomings of both monarchical and aristocratic government are inherent in these systems *per se*.

It will be the business of my next chapter to shed some light on the state of distress in question, to discover why it is popularly supposed to be unavoidable, and how it may be overcome without resorting to the witch-broth of Liberalism and its resulting mischiefs.

IV: Rulership and Responsibility

In the previous chapter it was suggested — (1) That Liberalism is but a means of relieving a temporary and morbid political situation; and, (2) That far from mankind's having any natural propensity to tamper with self-government, men much prefer to be free from such responsibilities, and favour the alternative of trustworthy leaders who can take charge of public affairs.

As its name suggests, Liberalism is a doctrine advocating liberty and the sort of polity that makes liberty possible. In the light of history it is a systematic protest against the oppression, injustice and constraints of bad government. It is therefore generally a more or less late reaction to a condition felt to be onerous and tyrannical and, unlike chieftainship, monarchy, aristocracy, or even primitive communism, it is not a spontaneous and instinctive product of healthy social life. It implies a negation, a counter measure. That is why it may fairly be described as a medicine.

As an exasperated response to provocation more or less prolonged, it bears on its face the ugly birthmarks of a delivery from thraldom. Indeed, although its principles were a long time hatching, the very term "Liberal" as applied to a political party professing the doctrines we associate with the name, only came into use in English politics after 1815, owing to Whig sympathy with the *Liberales* of Spain who were fighting for their freedom.

The first astonishing feature the historian notices in Liberalism is its late arrival on the scene. Without examining too minutely its remote beginnings, even if we place its first conception as a deliberate policy no earlier than the Reformation, there is still justification for the claim that as a protest against bad government, it was extraordinarily long delayed; and we are left marvelling at the long-suffering patience of the European masses for waiting so long before their endurance was exhausted. The fact that this protracted docility under misgovernment has provoked wonder is shown by the remark of a Radical agitator — Dr. Richard Price — who in 1789 asked, "Why are the nations of the world so patient under despotism? Why do they crouch to tyrants and

submit to be treated as if they were a herd of cattle?" (*A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*).

Incidentally, does not this support the argument advanced in the previous chapter, to the effect that the average man prefers almost anything rather than to meddle with government, and will suffer untold hardships before he will lift his nose from his own private grindstone to poke it into his nation's affairs?

Only when goaded beyond endurance does another mood supervene, and the trouble is that when once this mood is experienced it is not easily given up. It is true that a tradition of sound rulership maintained by a succession of able rulers, has hardly ever been known in Europe. Our Continent has witnessed the government of monarchs, dictators, aristocrats and even priests; yet only exceptionally has it enjoyed wise and beneficent rulership.

Indeed, in speaking of England alone it is no exaggeration to say that for a period of 1100 years — from St. Boniface to Asquith and the Parliament Act of 1911, which was a rude *congé* hurled at the heads of England's worthless aristocracy — we know of no Age in which the English ruling class, as a body subordinate to the sovereign, displayed even that minimum of wisdom and prudence which would have ensured their retention of the national leadership.

St. Boniface himself, William of Malmesbury and the later historians of the Middle Ages, all concur in condemning the Nobility of the Anglo-Saxon period. The rulers who followed, although perhaps less reprehensible, because they were not natives but Feudal barons of foreign extraction, were no less "Manslayers of the poor"; and in the record of their successors right up to the end of Victoria's reign, there is no instance of even a few decades during which the class enjoying privilege and power may truthfully be said to have fulfilled the obligations their rights entailed and to have justified the advantages of their exalted rank.

The dignitaries of the Church and even the Sovereigns themselves were often, throughout English history, partners with the aristocracy in the crimes that finally shattered the common people's faith in all power not subject to popular control; and although Charles I's reign was by no means as culpable as that of other monarchs in this respect, the fact that, after his execution, the House of Commons proposed the abolition of the Lords as "useless and dangerous", indicates the extent to which, as early as the seventeenth century, the idea of nobility was becoming synonymous with the abuse of power.

The Highland clearances of the years 1807 to 1850 are alone sufficient evidence of the kind of high-handed tyranny practised more or less as a matter of course by men of power in Great Britain, for the barbarity shown towards the wretched victims of these forcible clearances beggars description. In his *History of the Highland Clearances*, Chap. XVI, Alexander Mackenzie says, "It is altogether a tale of barbarous action unequalled in the annals of agrarian crime." And he adds, "Atrocities were perpetrated which I cannot trust myself to describe in my own words." One "nobleman", the Earl of Selkirk . . . "allured many of the evicted to emigrate to his estate on the Red River in British North America. . . . After a long and otherwise disastrous passage they found themselves deceived and deserted by the Earl; left to their unhappy fate in an inclement wilderness, without any protection from the hordes of Red Indian savages . . . who plundered them of all on their arrival and finally massacred them, save a small remnant." And so on, for page after page of harrowing details which make the reader's blood run cold. Nor does Mackenzie conceal the fact that the clergy, to their shame, constantly sided with the "oppressing lairds."

But I have jumped several centuries. If, however, we turn our glance backwards and try to discover the condition of the humblest among the ruled say, from the days of Edward I onward, we constantly have before our eyes a spectacle of more or less ruthless exploitation and injustice. Measures had to be taken repeatedly to prevent the oppression of the masses by landowners.

The unfair assessments levied on the poor and the undue burdens imposed on the unenfranchised classes were a perpetual source of discontent and revolt in the towns. On the land in the rural districts of England, conditions were no better, and no later than 1360, John Ball, driven to lead an open revolt among the peasants as the result of the cruel hardships they had to endure, was inspired less by ideas imbibed from Wycliffe's teaching than by the spectacle of misery and want all about him.

The major Peasant's Revolt occurred in 1581, and Garnier states that the rustics had been starved into rebellion. (*Annals of the British Peasantry*, 1908, Chap. VI). Nor was their revolt confined to one quarter. Everywhere, from Kent to Yorkshire there was seething discontent. Norwich was sacked, insurgents marched from parts as distant as Devonshire and Lancashire, and three leaders, Tyler, Hales and Grindecobbe, conducted armies of peasants towards London.

And this was not the only incident of the kind. Sixty-nine years later, in 1450, another major peasants' revolt occurred under Jack Cade, and yet another in 1549 under Kett. And we are told that, without exception, the fundamental cause of these outbursts of rustic passion was "agrarian oppression". We have but to read an old poem like Langland's *The Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman*, in order to appreciate that as early as the fourteenth century and onwards, there were in the nation all the signs of a hard, greedy possessing class exploiting the weak and defenceless when and wherever they could. In the poems known as "King Edward and the Shepherd" and "God Speed the Plough" passages occur which illustrate vividly the asperities of the peasant's lot and reveal much the same conditions as Langland depicts.

In the unspeakable horrors of the era covering the Industrial Revolution, we again encounter the ruthless abuse of power and indifference to lower-class suffering which have characterised the attitude of the ruling classes throughout the 1100 years of English history, beginning with the times of St. Boniface. And all too seldom in all those years can attention be called to an aristocrat as truly noble and conscious of his duty and lofty function as the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, or to a commoner of influence and power as truly and constructively charitable as Michael Thomas Sadler.

But the record elsewhere in Europe is no less shocking. In France the degeneration of the nobility and their ultimate degradation under Louis XIV and XV is now common knowledge; whilst in Russia and Germany it suffices to state that it was by no means uncommon for some "aristocrats" to amuse themselves by taking pot-shots at their serfs or otherwise ill-treating them.

Many of the German nobility did not even shrink from selling their dependents to foreign powers as army recruits, a traffic which proved most lucrative. Schiller's *Cabale und Liebe* (1782) describes some of the more heart-breaking incidents to which this infamous practice led, and the fact that the German prince (now believed to have been Karl Eugen of Wurttemburg) referred to in the play actually sold his subjects to England, makes the plot of the drama of particular interest to English readers.

Thus, in George II's reign, English gold brought misery to thousands of German homes; for, in the war with America alone, the King managed to buy 17,742 recruits from the Duke of Brunswick, the Landgrave and Hereditary Prince of Hesse Cassel and the Prince of

Waldeck. Needless to say, very few of these unhappy youngsters ever saw their native land again. When Voltaire blamed Frederick the Great for tolerating the scandalous trade in human beings, the King replied on June 18th 1776 denying that he countenanced it and added: "If the Landgrave had come from my school he would never have sold his subjects to the English like cattle in order to drive them to the slaughter house". (*Schlachtbank*).

According to a contract concluded in those days, infantrymen cost 90 and cavalrymen 288 florins, and this price included the cost of recruiting them. A few protests were certainly raised in England against this white-slave trade and, on March 5th 1776 Lord Camden, in the House of Lords, said. "The whole business is a mercenary bargain for the price of troops on one side and the sale of human blood on the other, and the devoted wretches thus purchased for slaughter are mercenaries in the worst sense of the word." (*Der Soldatenhandel Deutscher Fuersten Nach Amerika*, by F. Kapp, 1874). Truth to tell, however, the protests raised in England were chiefly against the ruinous cost of the traffic. These are but isolated facts culled at random from the past history of our own and European aristocracy, and no one familiar with the social and political records of the last millennium would maintain that they are either exceptionally black or present an unfair picture of the class enjoying privilege and power.

When, therefore, in 1887, Lord Acton pronounced his famous dictum that "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely" (Letter to Bishop Creighton), we can understand even if we disagree with his conclusion. For, when making this pessimistic statement, he stood at a turning point in the history of politics. With but a little more wisdom might well have blazed the trail of a wholly new, hitherto unsuspected and constructive approach to the problem of power and the secret of sound government. What is more, he might also have administered the *coup de grâce* to the gathering forces of militant Liberalism.

His shallow generalisation was however not seen as such by any one. Most Western people had long had it in mind, and the fact that his words were the tocsin calling on all men of sound understanding at long last to have done with Power and Privilege and for ever to eschew aristocracy, brands Acton as perhaps the greatest figure in the *Sieges Allee* (or Triumphal Avenue) of Liberal sophistry.

V: The Danger Signal

In the last chapter an all too brief account was given of the sort of abuses of power and privilege which ultimately conspired completely to discredit aristocratic government in England and the Continent of Europe.

In truth, however, the few details I gave as evidence of the persistent misrule of the powerful and privileged classes of Christendom throughout the period reviewed, were not essential to my argument; for this aspect of Europe's social history really lies embalmed in one single word in daily use by two of the greatest peoples of our Continent.

The reader will easily be able to think of many words in the English language which recall whole chapters of history and national development. Sometimes the mere surname of a well-known figure enriches the language. Occasionally a word serves merely as the designation of a class or sect.

We have, for instance, Simon Magus, whose name perpetuates the notion of infamous traffic in sacred things; Wellington with whom the illiterate associate only a particular kind of boot, and Gladstone who similarly suggests a travelling bag. Then we have Ned Lud, Burke and Boycott, who memorialize respectively the revolt against machinery in 1799, the murdering of people for the purpose of selling their bodies for dissection, and the shutting out from all human intercourse, or ostracizing, of one generally disapproved. There is no need to prolong the list. Such names as Dr. T. Bowdler, E. Clerihew, the Marquis de Sade, Martinet, Dr. Guillotin and Bernard Shaw will occur to the reader in this connection.

The notable feature about all the words derived from these famous names is that their relation to the men whom they recall can now be easily discovered by merely consulting a dictionary.

But this is not true of such words as "Puritan", "Chartist" or "Covenanter". In the case of the particular word I have in mind, no dictionary reveals the identity and merits (except inferentially) of him or of those whose way of life, influence and particular characteristics it summarizes and enshrines. Indeed, as a comprehensive abstract

of centuries of European social history it is, as a locution, quite unique. For if we could imagine a catastrophe so irreparable as the total destruction of all our historical documents bearing on the life of our ancestors in the remote and recent past it would still be possible, by merely studying the origin and the first and final connotation of this word, to reconstruct a more or less accurate sketch of centuries of European life and politics, and with surprising exactitude retrace the stages by which we have reached our present political plight and institutions.

Indeed, in view of the fact that all history has been written by partisans of one political school or another, and that there is no such thing as a Science of History, the lessons embedded and preserved in this one word are more likely to yield a true picture of the past than if the whole of the works of English, French and German historians were completely absorbed and digested.

And what is this comprehensive term, briefly enshrining centuries of our social history, hinting at the course of our political evolution, exposing the behaviour of generations of a certain class in the community, and dually suggesting the fatal errors of those alleged "thinkers" whose reaction to this behaviour has shaped our present destiny."

The reader will hardly believe it when he is told that whenever and wherever he perceives a red light, a signal summoning him to HALT, and any caution warning him to proceed no further, not to touch or handle a certain object or not to push open a closed door; whenever in fact he is told that he faces imminent peril if he ventures any further, and he sees one word conveying this counsel to him, the word in question is the one I have in mind. For it is the disyllable DANGER, perpetuating not merely countless famous and preponderatingly infamous names, but also an epitome of centuries of European history, of which I am thinking.

No word in any other language than French or English preserves such a précis of bygone times. A student needs only to know its etymology in order at once to be able to give a trustworthy account of European misrule and all its deplorable consequences. Without resorting to one dusty document of the past he will hold all the clues to the origin of Liberalism, together with the names of all its mentally defective offspring, from Democracy, Socialism and Communism down to Feminism and Anarchy. He will also possess a synopsis of all the imbecilities of your Regicides, Revolutionists, Republicans and

Radicals with the list of their many stooges from John Ball, Lilburne, Hartlib, Walwyn and Winstanley, to Locke, Voltaire, Rousseau, Godwin, Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Bernard Shaw, Marx, Lenin *et hoc genus omne.*

For, in the etymology of this one word DANGER, a political tragedy of prodigious consequence lies concealed.

It is a word whose modern sinister meaning developed gradually out of the innocent and faintly benevolent old French word, "*dangier*", signifying merely dominion, authority, jurisdiction — the relation of a lord or master to his dependant or subordinate (*Dominium*).

Originally, all it implied was "lordship". To be in anyone's "danger" meant simply to be under his jurisdiction or authority.

Chaucer in the fourteenth century still used the word in this sense, although by that time it had already begun to acquire unpleasant connotations. Lydgate, his junior by some 30 years, in the 42nd stanza of his *A Sayenge of the Nightyngale*, speaks of Christ's bearing His Cross to Cavalry to make us strong against the "dangier" (authority, influence) of non-Christian forces, Shakespeare, in the *Merchant of Venice*, makes Portia ask Antonio whether he stands in Shylock's danger or not — meaning Shylock's power (Act IV, Sc. 1).

And the *New English Dictionary* quotes a passage from Bishop Ridley's works (1550) to illustrate how the word was still being used merely as a synonym for authority or control, in the sixteenth century. "They put themselves", wrote the Bishop, "in the danger of King Ahab saying, 'Behold we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are pitiful and merciful.'"

Do we need to indulge in much ardent guessing in order to discover how a word originally meaning no more than authority, control, jurisdiction, could ultimately so consistently, and in the end permanently, have earned the sinister connotation of jeopardy, fatal hazard, mortal peril, as to serve even the most learned of two such great nations as France and England, as an invariable premonition of disaster, if not of death?

What could have happened to turn this innocent word which originally promised only protection, justly exercised authority, and equitable control, into a token of threatening ruin? What must the powerful have unremittingly done in order insensibly to make the populace of two such countries as France and England understand the word as meaning no more than a signal of alarm, a warning of Nemesis?

In view of the crowd's ignorance of psychology and history it is not astonishing that centuries of disreputable conduct on the part of their rulers should have culminated in their transforming "*dangier*" into *danger* and have convinced them of the worthlessness of patriarchal control and authority — i.e. Aristocracy. For the masses are not composed of thinkers, and such hasty, makeshift substitutes for Power that had been abused by a breed of men who had no business to be masters at all such substitutes as Liberalism, Democracy, Universal Suffrage must seem to an oppressed people the very essence of wisdom and political sanity.

This, however, does not excuse the so-called "thinkers" (*les clercs*) from John Ball to Bernard Shaw, whom I have enumerated above, for having endorsed the desperate measures seized upon by an outraged mob who saw only danger in *dangier*. It does not excuse them for having failed to distinguish the sins of the magisterial class from the institution of Magistracy itself, and for having condemned the principle of the rule of the best before making sure that the sins of misrule had indeed been committed by the "Best".

They would have needed only to look as far as Northern Italy, or back at ancient Egypt to have learned that *dangier* by no means necessarily spells danger. And if they blindly acquiesced in the hasty and makeshift substitutes for patriarchal rulership devised by upstart leaders of the mob, they confessed themselves as shallow and ill-informed as these upstart leaders themselves.

Anarchy with all its perils and miseries is now fast spreading over England and France. The fanatical pursuit of so-called "Freedom" has culminated in the reign of universal licence; and as the Western World has long abandoned all belief in the possibility of a wise ruler class, no such class is now being bred.

Before the day of ultimate reckoning arrives, however, it may not be wholly bootless for those unfamiliar with the social history of England and France, to ponder on the centuries of mostly inarticulate suffering that must have elapsed before a harmless notion like that suggested by the word "*dangier*" with all its undertones of protective benevolence, could, through the vulgar and ill-bred behaviour of bogus aristocrats, have become a warning of imminent injury.

VI: Phantom Life-Belts

My fourth chapter may be thought to have ended on a note of too fulsome praise of Lord Acton. But when I described him as the greatest figure in the *Sieges Allee* of Liberalism this was not mere irony. For if Liberalism marks the zenith of political wisdom, Acton deserves every syllable of my praise.

In one sentence he summarised Europe's experience of one thousand years of so called "aristocratic" rule and, as Dr. David Thomson says, "struck the authentic note of the democratic approach to politics." (*The Democratic Ideal in France and England*, Chap. I).

The opportunity to state a principle that would have shed urgently needed light on the millennium in question was both timely and propitious, and the fact that he missed it and lent his authority to a misunderstanding of the issue, is seriously to be deplored. — Not that any wiser pronouncement could have halted the Movement. But at least its philosophy would have been shaken; for Mill, one of its leading defenders, was already wavering.

The crying need at the time when he finished his treatises on *Liberty and Representative Government* (*circa* 1860), was an authoritative denial of the popular belief that power inevitably spelt irresponsible tyranny. Acton's sweeping generalisation thus had a taint of vulgarity, of which even Rousseau was free; for did he not advocate Aristocracy?

Does the generalisation perhaps indicate a strain of vulgarity in Acton himself? He was certainly a mongrel, and the *Dictionary of National Biography*, usually courteous, says he was "of mingled race." A vulgar spirit certainly hovered over English thought and sentiment throughout the nineteenth century, and it has gone from strength to strength in our time.

How else does one explain the fact that Macaulay could, without tarnishing his good name, speak of Charles I as most undoubtedly "a scholar and a gentleman" although "he was false"? (*Edinburgh Rev.* Dec. 1831) and that less than a century later Maurice Woods could also without risk to his reputation, speak of the Royal Martyr's son as being "at once a great rogue and a great gentleman"? (*A History of the*

Tory Party, p. 34). What are we to think of a public whose notion of a gentleman and of a great gentleman was compatible with roguery and falsity? These may seem but paltry examples, but they are significant.

Can we believe that Acton with all his historical erudition and wide knowledge of his fellow men, knew of no ruler, no individual of high rank, ancient or modern, who was immune to the corrupting influence of power?

Or was his remark subjective, the outcome of introspection? For if I, of a generation later than his, can recall at least one public figure and one unknown gentlemen — the Rev. John Scott Lidgett and my first chief in the Army, a Scot named Major Ayrton — whom 1 would cheerfully have entrusted with absolute power, can Acton have been less fortunate?

But it is the Liberal's fatal heritage, bequeathed by Western Man's most unhappy experience, to have lost all faith in a ruler class and to have become convinced that if safety and justice are to be secured on earth, two formidable evils must for ever be eschewed — what Bentham in his day was to describe as the two "Sinister Interests: the Monarchical and the Aristocratic."

Overlooking (among other things) the fact that men of virtue, wisdom and honour never pullulate in any society; that it is easier to find a minority than a majority of good men and true, and consequently that on the score of probability alone, if is more feasible to aim at a good government by the few than by the multitude, the Liberal sought his alternative to aristocratic rule in a system which presupposed, not merely the possibility, but the actual reality of whole populations providentially endowed with qualities which are known to be rare, if not exceptional.

To the credit of the masses be it said that it took some time, despite all the indefatigable efforts of agitators among the intelligentsia, to convince them that there could be any workable alternative to the traditional and aristocratic form of rulership.

Prompted by their inveterate aversion from meddling with national affairs, to which allusion has already been made, and by the instinctive conservatism of all living creatures which makes them prefer the "devil they know"; actuated, moreover, by a saner estimate of human nature than that cherished by the Liberal dreamers about them, the masses would have been ready to put up with bad government *ad infinitum*; for if conditions became intolerable, had nor Thomas Aquinas taught them that they might always resort to rebellion, without necessarily

improvising newfangled ruling systems? Could the fantastic proposal to inaugurate self-rule be seriously meant?

It was at this stage in the evolution of the idea of Popular Government in the West, that a searching scrutiny of the causes of failure and degradation in aristocratic rule was called for and might have been most fruitful.

For unless mankind could believe in human equality (and we have seen that no one in his heart really believed in any such sorry rubbish), in which case it mattered little who ruled whom, the problem of government could hardly be solved by the mere transference of all power from the old *élite* to the multitude. It was a matter of having to mend what had broken down, of eliminating what had been amiss with the former ruling class and their notion of their privileges and obligations.

For the operative factor in every Right, above all the Right to Rule, is its corresponding Duty.

If, therefore, the Duty of the rulers had been grossly neglected, the task of Reform consisted in devising and imposing checks and counter-checks which would tend to maintain a high standard of performance in the ruling *élite*, and in discovering what conditions had to be observed if a competent and worthy breed (*souche*) of rulers was to be reared.

Any other course, however powerfully it might seem to have been indicated by dubious Graeco-Roman precedents, constituted a leap in the dark, a pessimistic clutching at phantom life-belts and untried makeshifts, which could inspire hope only in deluded idealists, however well-meaning they might be.

In the sequel we shall see that the task of Reform as here described was to prove both practicable and salutary in other spheres of social life, so that there is nothing romantic or far-fetched in suggesting that it could have been undertaken by those who were faced with the problem of reconstituting a villain-proof system of aristocratic rule.

And had the reformers not most unfortunately overlooked the fact that rulership is not merely a matter of administration, of executive functions connected with the nation's relations with other countries, its armed forces, its maintainance of Law and Order, and the control of the public finances, but also *and most essentially* a matter of establishing a desirable way of life in the community, of setting the Tone of the people's sentiments and aims, and of instituting standards of propriety, decency, good manners and good taste among them — had the reformers.

I say, not made the mistake of supposing that an *élite* could be dispensed with in Government, this oversight would probably never have been committed.

It was the belief that national Government was equivalent to managing a business, running a successful General Store, and organising public services, that lent more than three-quarters of its cogency to the argument for Democracy; and the cry that did not fail to go up late in the nineteenth century and was enthusiastically taken up by men like Horatio Bottomley — I refer to the cry for a Government of Business Men — is evidence of how vulgarly limited the idea of Government was in the Liberal confraternity.

A constructive and fruitful reform or rulership could, however, only have emanated from above. It was bootless to expect the desired model of a regenerated and well-disciplined cliff to come from the class of the ruled. What could they know about the matter?

It was, however, Europe's tragic ill-luck never to receive from its whilom ruling class any such scheme of reform as is here suggested; and, as I shall show in the sequel, it was actually left to Liberal thinkers of the twentieth century to propose not only the restoration of the *élite* for the government of these islands, but also the necessary measures that would need to be adopted for the production of such a class. Meanwhile, however, the failure of the powerful classes to regenerate their ranks and chasten their behaviour meant only dial the record of ignominy was indefinitely prolonged.

Consequently, in due course, there arose an ever increasing agitation in favour of popular government.

What, at bottom, did this alternative mean? For we must remember that until the quack reformers of the Liberal School began to make considerable headway with their programme of democratic control, civilised humanity had come to see in the traditional form of government by a ruler class, a natural phenomenon not unlike the motions of the planets and the phases of the moon.

When therefore, by degrees, the startling doctrine that aristocratic rule was not a Natural Law, began to be learnt by the masses, a commotion ensued similar to that which would result to-day if men were given the means of controlling the weather.

Instantly, every Tom, Dick and Harry would insist on serving his own best interests by ordering Rain, Sunshine or Wind. Factions would form to induce one sort of climate or the other, and the conflict of meteorological policies would lead to chaos if not catastrophe.

Finally, the Common Man gazing distractedly on the national landscape, would see nothing but rocking tree-tops, crashing branches, and standing crops devastated by contrary winds.

Let no one suppose that this imagined outcome of Weather Control differs much from the consequences of Popular Government. In both cases the result cannot help being chiefly — Wind.

VII: The Sanctity of Private Property

When amid much confusion Europe gradually made the discovery that its ruler castes could not be trusted and need no longer be obeyed, it struck very few people as fantastic that certain bright sparks among the intelligentsia should be propounding the doctrine that, in matters of politics, Jack was as good as his master — if not slightly better!

The populace, suffering under intolerable injustices, were in no mood to be too critical of the hair-raising innovations which this reversal of political rôles implied. The invitation henceforth to believe that no difference really worth considering existed between men; that freedom meant that no subject was too abstruse or complex for the average man's understanding; that there was nothing sacred about private property because everywhere its sanctity was being blatantly desecrated; that heredity and the alleged transmission of innate gifts were deliberate fictions, seeing that in countless cases they had proved a delusion; finally that the notion of a family tradition as a means of building up precious lineal virtues was a pure myth — all these beliefs, extravagant though they were, the ill-informed majority accepted without demur.

And this was the more surprising, especially in the case of the last, because it was propounded in an Age when the populace everywhere was chiefly agricultural and therefore aware of the possibility of preserving family qualities in livestock and of the methods employed to do it.

Private Property, for instance, had evidently needed defending even in Aristotle's day (See *Politics* II, Bk. II, 1263a to 1264b); whilst the Romans had abused the institution so shockingly that the Communism discernible in early Church teaching was probably only a reaction to the plutocratic abuses of the period. Throughout the Middle Ages the institution continued to be degraded by the affluent and, from St. Gregory who, in the sixth century argued that in our gifts to the poor "we do but restore to them that which is their own," and St. Thomas Aquinas who, some six centuries later, advocated robbery as a means

of relieving destitution, down to Lenin who, in April 1917, incited the people of St. Petersburg to plunder by urging them to "Rob back that which has been robbed", there is an unbroken tradition of revolt against plutocratic vices.

In England, the peasant uprisings of 1381, 1450 and 1549, mentioned in a previous chapter, owed their doctrinal backing to the shallow ideas of the "intellectuals" of the Age. For, as in the modern world, so in the past, no matter how inarticulate the long-suffering masses might be, there were always glib and hare-brained agitators to hand who with unwavering self-confidence posed as champions of the oppressed, and placed before them half-baked schemes of reform and "progress" which seemed self-evident and incontravertible. John Ball, who led the first large peasant revolt, acknowledged that he derived his teaching from John Wycliffe, a typical fourteenth century intellectual. It has been contended that because the works containing Wycliffe's Communistic views were in Latin, they were inaccessible to the common herd. But his many disciples and sympathisers could easily have conveyed his ideas to the people; and as for John Ball, as he was a priest he probably understood Latin and could read it. At all events he admitted that he derived his subversive ideas from the famous reformer.

And here we may well pause a moment to consider Wycliffe's views about Private Property and the way he attacked it as an institution. He maintained that righteousness was the sole indefeasible title to it; consequently that no sanctity could appertain to the private possessions of the unrighteous, which amounted to declaring such possessions were open to confiscation.

Wycliffe's claim can however hardly be sustained. It may be wiser and more realistic than many of the pleas advanced in more recent times in favour of Private Property, but it has only to be put to the test to be found wanting. For it overlooks that one feature of Private Property which in all circumstances establishes its Sanctity; i.e. its appropriateness to its owner.

Asked what constitutes the sanctity or inviolability of a private possession we can but reply: that attribute which makes it impossible to confiscate it without irreparable loss and not merely the loss suffered by the owner, but above all that suffered by the possession itself and thus indirectly by the society in which the possession as a form of wealth exists.

In short, its sanctity resides in its relation to its appropriate owner. Now this may have little to do with righteousness, because the most

worthless villain may own an object which has value and usefulness only in his hands. One example will illustrate the principle.

Imagine a child owning a box of lead soldiers and a virtuoso owning a violin. The moment the two proceed to an act of mutual confiscation the sanctity of their property is at one stroke violated because in each case it has become quite worthless. True, the owners have been despoiled; but society is concerned only with the sanctity which is imparted to possessions when they are in proper hands. The fact that the exchange in our illustration reduces both possessions to the rank of mere junk, amounts to the desecration of the Sanctity of the objects in question as property, and society suffers a dead loss in consequence.

This is the aristocratic valuation of Private Property, and no other possesses any cogency.

Wycliffe's statement of the case — and he was one of the first Englishmen to state it thus — overlooks the essential factor, and was therefore one of the earliest European attempts to undermine the aristocratic view of wealth. It helped to vulgarise this view and suggested a wrong reason for the right to confiscate private possessions — a reason repeatedly advanced for the spoliation of its victims by the Spanish Inquisition.

In the modern world there appears to survive but one vestige of the aristocratic view of the Sanctity of Private Property, and it consists in the practice in agricultural areas of dispossessing a bad farmer of his land. For although not explicitly stated, this deprivation means that the land in question has lost its Sanctity as Private Property by being inappropriately owned.

The fact that an enormous amount of Private Property at present consists of funded capital which in countless cases is inappropriately owned, hardly requires stating. But it is quite another matter to discover means by which the Sanctity of such property, or its lack of Sanctity, could be determined.

At all events, what is wholly beyond doubt is the fact that the failure to grasp and abide by what constituted the Sanctity of Private Properly inevitably vulgarised the notion of possession. It degraded ownership and the riches owned, and naturally led to our present state in which it is considered quite unexceptionable, not only to tax everybody indiscriminately, irrespective of their relationship to their possessions, but also blindly to impose graduated taxes and graduated Death Duties also regardless of the Sanctity possibly appertaining to any of the Property thus confiscated.

The difference between such actions and the Communist policy of regarding the State as a wiser disposer of property than any individual owner, is purely theoretical; and people who acquiesce in such spoliation and yet denounce Communism have exaggerated confidence in their thinking powers.

Owing to their egalitarian convictions and inveterate pessimism, the Liberals have always tended arbitrarily to demolish every institution which has foundered through bad management, exactly as if it had been wrecked by its own inherent imperfections. And, owing to these two failings, Liberals have always drifted suspiciously close to Anarchy and Communism. They have always been free with other people's money in order to promote their doubtful policies. Never having properly understood the Sanctity of Private Property they have always been to the fore in advocating the doctrine that the State is the best spender of the people's wealth. But pardonable as this lack of insight may have been in respect of mere financial possessions, it is wholly reprehensible in regard to more characterful property.

Yet it was the Liberals who in England at least, in 1894 and 1907, drove the last nails into the coffin of that kind of property which still has some legitimate claim to Sanctity. When Sir William Harcourt introduced his Bill to legalise Graduated Death Duties and to increase income tax, he at one stroke abolished the often beneficent nexus existing between landlord and farmer, which had done so much to maintain both English agriculture and above all the quality of English livestock at a high level. Lord Roseberry who was Prime Minister at the time, tried to open his eyes to the disastrous consequences his Bill would be likely to have. But the Chancellor was unconvinced and his Bill became law. It was followed in 1907 by another Liberal measure which not only introduced a graduated income tax, but also increased Death Duties — an enactment that finally wrecked what the 1894 Bill had left standing.

Commenting on the former Bill, Mr. Stanley Leathes says: "Owing to agricultural depression many old families had been forced to sell or let their residences and domains. And if an estate changed hands several times at short intervals, the charge was more than many estates could bear. The decay of old families was hastened, old ties of landlord and tenant, of squire and peasantry were dissolved, and in many cases the place of the old landlords was taken by those who inherited no traditional obligations to the land or its occupants." (*The Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. XII, Chap. III).

A correct view of the Sanctity of Private Property would have put a brake on these developments even if it did not prevent them altogether. But it should not be forgotten that most unfortunately the liberalised Conservatives of the day who as a Party in Opposition were bound to oppose Harcourt's measure, had no better understanding of the Sanctity of Private Property than that professed by Harcourt and later by Lloyd George.

VIII: Liberalism and the Reformation

J. Holland Rose maintained that the "chief propelling power of democracy in England was misery" (*The Rise of Democracy*, p. 10); and in so far as the final drive towards Universal Suffrage is concerned, this is true. But generally speaking the statement is inaccurate, for it implies that the poverty, privation and oppression, suffered by the masses owing to the worthlessness of their secular rulers, caused the revolt that generated the democratic movement. It was not, however, chiefly by this form of misrule that the seeds of Popular Government were sown, hut strange to say by the gross abuses of the ecclesiastical authorities, whose excesses and reckless tyrannies at last outraged not merely the populace but, what was more important, their temporal rulers.

And it is probably correct to maintain that even the latter, in their revolt against the clerics, inadvertently committed themselves to doctrines which were eventually to be turned against them and their order. For, in the prolonged and successful struggle of both rulers and ruled against the Church's exacting pretensions and privileges, ideas about freedom and equality began to be formulated which eventually the intelligentsia among the populace eagerly applied to politics. Even when this stage was reached, however, the humble reticence among the masses delayed for some time their readiness to step into their masters' shoes. It was not enough that for generations these same masters, like the Church, had been guilty of gross abuses. What the common people required in order to be convinced that they could become self-governing was a body of doctrine justifying the belief in Mankind's right to Freedom and Equality. And, surprising as it may seem, it was through apostasy and religions sedition that this body of doctrine was ultimately formulated. Nor is it without interest to note that in both the religious rebels themselves and their teaching, the common factor was a pronounced aversion to Aristotle, the aristocratic tendencies of whose philosophy found no favour with the anticlericals. For he had taught that the men "born to govern" were they who had

been "endowed with minds capable of reflection and forethought", and therefore superior to common mankind, and that the association of the two — born rulers and born subjects — was of practical advantage to both. (*Politics* II, 1252a and 1254a).

These principles firmly inculcated upon the population by tradition (also, though much more rarely, by experience) had to be exposed as nonsense, and this could be done only by demonstrating that no such fundamental distinctions existed; in fact, that all men were equal.

At first this sounded so absurd that its advocacy presented difficulties, and many did not hesitate to dispute it. Rabelais, for instance in the sixteenth century, boldly declared that "*en toutes compagnies il y a plus de fols que de sages, et la plus grande partie surmonte toujours la meilleure.*" (*Gargantua*, Livre II, Chap. X: "In every human group there are more fools than sages and the majority always prevails over the superior elements.")

In the heat of their disputations, however, little did the reformers suspect that their attacks on the most powerful institution of the day, and their appeals for a revision of religious doctrine and observance, would ultimately redound as much to political as to religious transformation. Yet the innovations they introduced actually founded a political faith which was new to the people and their times. For, by insensibly grafting on to the principles thought necessary for a successful assault on the Mediaeval Church — i.e. the right of laymen to interpret the scriptures as they thought fit, and the doctrine of human equality — those aspects of Graeco-Roman politics which were relevant to their aims, the leading reformers virtually launched the Liberal and Democratic Movement in Politics and gave it considerable plausibility.

For most of them, from Wycliffe to Luther and Hooker, were scholars besides being ecclesiastical rebels, and, as except among the masses, there was no ignorance of the political improvisations of the ancient Greeks and Romans, Liberalism may be said to owe its philosophy to men who, although actuated chiefly by hostility to the Mediaeval Church and the tyrannies its supremacy had fostered, were inevitably influenced by their familiarity with classical antiquity.

In the European world of the late fourteenth century, there was in both Church and State much evidence of privileges abused and rights enjoyed without the performance of any corresponding duties. Against the civil forms of these evils, revolt, as we have seen, certainly smouldered and sometimes broke out. But nowhere was the indignation

more persistent, violent and overt (because it was felt also by the temporal rulers) than against the Church, whose members, aware of the opportunities for the exploitation of the community afforded by their religious monopoly, pressed their advantage to reckless limits.

What with the priesthood's complete freedom from responsibility to the civil authorities — a privilege which attracted to the lower clerical orders countless criminals and vagabonds who could thereby defy the officers of justice, and also tempted to crime even those bred to the Church and performing its functions; what with the unremitting and crippling exactions consisting of annates, tithes, and the sale of dispensations, absolutions and indulgences, all of which not only incensed the secular rulers, but also outraged the peasantry by whose hard toil the necessary wealth was supplied; discontent and hostility to the Church was an ever increasing source of revolt throughout the later Middle Ages. For, whilst the fabulous cost of the central administration in Rome and the lavish expenditure of the leading prelates everywhere, with their constant demands on every national purse, dismayed the temporal rulers, what most embittered the peasantry was the wretched meanness of their own lot compared with the luxuries and fat-living everywhere to be seen among the ministers of religion and the affluent leisure and frequently concubinary lives these people led, whilst they themselves, especially the villeins among them, were subjected to forced labour and, with their wives and children, were obliged to set an example in self-denial and austerity.

The drain on the national wealth through the sale of absolutions and indulgences alone (i.e. apart from Peter's Pence, abolished by Henry VIII in 1534) was considerable. We are told that "Europe was overrun with pardon-sellers" authorised to sell indulgences, "and for centuries their lies, frauds, exactions and evil living were the cause of the bitterest and most indignant complaints." (*The Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. I. Chap. XIX). Who can wonder that "the pretensions of the Church were becoming unendurable to the advancing intelligence of the Age?" (*Ibid*).

If Chilperic I, grandson of Clovis, and ruler of the Western Kingdom of France, as early as the sixth century A.D., felt entitled to declare, "Our treasury remains impoverished and our wealth transferred to the churches; bishops alone are our rulers; they alone are great; our dignity is dying and is transmitted to the prelates of our cities" ("*Voici que notre fisc demeure pauvre, que nos richesses sont transférées aux eglises; personne ne règne si ce n'est les évêques; notre dignité périt*

et est transportée aux évêques des cités"); if, moreover, he cancelled wills made in favour of the Church and annulled endowments made by his father, Clotaire, can we wonder that seven centuries later both the people and rulers of Europe had grown sufficiently restive to lend a willing ear to the Reformers? (See *Histoire des Francs* by Grégoire de Tours (VIth century A.D. Livre VI, Chap. XLVI and Livre VII Chap. VII. Translation by M. Guizot, 1861).

The intellectuals of the Age naturally seized upon the opportunity afforded by this widespread temper to dress their arguments for revolt in a doctrinal garb, and many of them, aware of the support they could count on from the masses and their temporal rulers, used the abuses of the Church as backing for their theological deviations from it.

It was thus that their reasoning and the grounds on which they based their attack on the Church became, as I have suggested above, the pillars of the Liberal and Democratic doctrines that ultimately prevailed.

Nor need this surprise us; for the aim of the Reformers was primarily to wean the people from the Church by laying bare its vices and undermining their respect for its sanctity and authority. And they did not shrink from this daring and dangerous task because they knew that they had the support, often clandestine, of the powerful in the land, without which they could hardly have hoped to succeed.

In order to overthrow clerical authority and be able to insist on religious freedom they knew they must convince their generation, first of all that everybody was free to formulate his own religious tenets and, with the Bible and Ins conscience as his guide, to criticise official theology and settle the terms of his own Belief; and secondly, that no essential virtue appertained to priests: therefore that every mail could be his own priest and deal directly with the Deity.

The first principle assumed the right of freedom of judgment; whilst the second rested on the claim that all men were equal.

In their effort to release the religions life from the thraldom of unworthy tyrants, they may be acquitted of any conscious intention of founding a novel political creed. But that this proved to be the outcome of their labours is unquestionable, and the historian, Dr. G. P. Gooch very rightly observes that "Modern Democracy is the child of the Reformation, not of the Reformers." (*English Democratic Ideas in the 17th Century*, Chap. I). Phyllis Doyle concurs. "The right to religious freedom," she says, "led to an assertion of political freedom," and "liberty of conscience" meant "a power of judgment which expressed

itself in political form as democratic control over the important organs of state, whether civil or ecclesiastical." (*A History of Political Thought*, Chap. IX). Whilst Dr. David Thomson, in a similar vein, says, "The English democratic dream has its roots ultimately in the mystical egalitarian ideals of the seventeenth century Puritans. It derives its accent of protest from Protestantism." (*The Democratic Ideal in France and England*, Chap. I, ii).

Another outcome of the Movement, which the Reformers could hardly have foreseen and would vehemently have deprecated if they had, was that by opening wide the portals of the Council Chamber and inviting all comers to join in the deliberations of Church and State, the masses were inevitably imbued with the idea that as they were competent to judge the most sacred and complex matters, the minor ones connected with Civil Government were as nothing in comparison, for the religious Whole must include the political Part.

Thus there occurred not only the lowering of the standards and requirements of all wisdom of judgment, but also an actual degradation of Thought itself. For if thought and judgment were free, how could they and the problems submitted to them and assumed to be soluble by them, be exalted or profound, let alone sacred? The era of snap-judgments, short-term policies and of Feelings masquerading as Thoughts, was thus ushered in; and insensibly there arose in modern Europe and its offshoots, a cheapening of the quality of wisdom. To inspire awe, it was better to be a showman than a thinker, with the result that again and again all over Western Civilisation, the dynamism of subversive religious ideas only came to be recognised after they had proved catastrophic.

In practical politics, these changes inevitably enthroned the Philosophy of Liberalism. And as sanity can only be restored by the total renunciation of this philosophy, Western Civilisation may well succumb in anarchy and chaos before the salutary *volte face* occurs. There are signs, indeed, that it is already succumbing in this way, and our only chance of survival lies in our being able so completely to besot and thereby weaken other — particularly Eastern — Powers, by spreading our Liberalism to them, that they will become as decadent as ourselves. We have already gone some considerable way towards achieving this end; for is not Democracy now established even in India? But whether it will last in that sub-continent is at least doubtful; and as to whether it is likely to last in the countless new States improvised by American and British efforts elsewhere in the World, we already know that this is hardly likely.

IX: The Natural Iniquity of Man

In Chapter VI we saw that, as the Rev. J. Nevill Figgis maintains, "religious liberty is rightly described as the parent of political." (*The Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. III, Chap. XXII). Nor was it long before the Reformers' claims were translated into the field of politics. In his *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (late 16th century, Bk. 1), Richard Hooker already demanded that government should be subject to popular consent, and he regarded "the equality of men by nature" as so obvious that it bound all men to mutual love, justice and charity. This, he said, expressed a state of "Liberty".

Locke built on Hooker's conclusions a political philosophy embodying all his claims, and argued that Man's natural condition before the dawn of Civilisation was one of "perfect freedom" and equality. His lack of anthropological information enabled him to draw a picture of primitive humanity, the unreality of which did not in the least disturb his sympathisers, especially as it summarised many of the sentiments popular at the time.

Thus, describing "what state all men are naturally in," he said it was one "of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions and persons as they think fit, within the bounds of the Law of Nature, without asking leave or depending upon the will of any other man. . . . A state of equality" in which "no one having more [power or jurisdiction] than another, there being nothing more evident than that creatures of the same species and rank, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of Nature, and the use of the same faculties, should also be equal one amongst another." (J. Locke: *Two Treatises on Government*, II, Chap. II).

Passing over the many false assumptions in this paragraph, a word must be said about the comment on Property which it contains. For the fact that one of the more serious thinkers of the seventeenth century could plead for the freedom to dispose of possessions unconditionally, indicates that already at that time the Liberal-minded had no conception of the aristocratic attitude to Property. Because, if the Sanctity of Private Property resides in the appropriateness of its

relation to its owner, any unconditional freedom to dispose of it might mean (and often did mean) its transference to one whose character and abilities made him wholly unfit to possess it, thus destroying its value and inflicting a loss on society.

Old Isaac knew better than that in 1700 B.C. For, although he gave Esau's birthright to Jacob through a ruse, it is clear that both he and his wife disapproved of Esau (*Genesis* XXVI, 35), that he was never really deceived (*Genesis* XXVII, 35-40), and that he abided by his supposed error after the fraud had been exposed. He thus set an example which was unfortunately ignored by the property owners of England; for the rule of primogeniture (established in Henry II's reign) inevitably led to frequent desecrations of Private Property's Sanctity. And the fact that in the Middle Ages "primogeniture, even in royal houses was not accepted without much opposition", and that in the case of a fief "primitive usage seems to have recognised the lord's right to grant it to the son whom he considered best fit to hold it" shows how superior in many respects was the mind of Mediaeval Man over that of his descendants.

In *Parzival* I, verses 4-5, Wolfram von Eschenbach, only a decade or two before Henry III's reign, actually declared primogeniture as an "outlandish custom", and an "alien trick." (See M. Bloch: *Feudal Society*, Part IV, Chap. XIV). Hardly 600 years later Darwin condemned it, not as an alien trick, but as a procedure wholly inimical to sound biological principles. "Primogeniture", he wrote to J. D. Hooker, "is dreadfully opposed to selection; suppose the firstborn bull was necessarily made by each farmer the begetter of his stock!" (*Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, Vol. II, p. 385).

Despite the raptures of the early champions of Liberalism, they were not blind to the graver implications of their doctrines. They soon saw that if they were to succeed with their plea for self-government on the basis of Liberty and Equality, they must appease the alarm their proposals provoked among the more realistic thinkers of the Age. These opponents of the mass dictatorship Popular Government promised to establish, argued that as most men were by nature unwise, envious, acquisitive and self-seeking, Democracy, far from guaranteeing the public weal, would only cause confusion and anarchy through everyone trying to further his own private interest even at the cost of the general good. This, strange to say, was even Cromwell's view.

In meeting this objection, the Liberals really had no choice. They were compelled to rejoin that it was utterly fallacious to assume that

most men would behave in the way alleged. On the contrary, they said, "Men were born good. Therefore Popular Government could not possibly prove injurious."

As Lord Bryce was later to point out, the idea of Popular Government was that "With Liberty and Equality the naturally good instincts would spring up with the flower of rectitude and bear the fruit of brotherly affection. Men would work for the community . . . would refine manners and increase brotherly kindness." Referring to the ultimate effects of this romanticism, based on false psychology, Lord Bryce adds, "Thus democratic institutions are now deemed to carry with them as a sort of gift of nature, the capacity to use them well." (*Modern Democracies*, Vol. I, Part I. Chap V).

Truth to tell, no more important issue could possibly have been debated; for, as Father Frederick Muckermann, S.J., has declared, "In discussing how men should be governed, it cannot be a matter of indifference whether we consider human nature as being radically bad as Luther did, or as radically good as Rousseau maintained." (*Dictatorship on Its Trial*, 1930, Chap. III).

Machiavelli thought this problem at least important enough to require solution before one could attempt to govern, for he wrote: "They who lay the foundations of a State and furnish it with laws, as is shown by all who have treated of civil government and by examples of which history is full, assume that all men are bad and will always, when they have free field, give loose to their inclinations." (*Discorsi*, 1531, Bk. I, Chap. 5).

Great Britain's greatest thinker, David Hume, after acknowledging that "Political writers have established it as an axiom that in contriving any system of government . . . every man ought to be supposed a knave," himself concludes, "It is therefore a just political maxim that every man must be supposed a knave." (*Essay* VI: Of the Independency of Parliament).

Hume's great contemporary, Samuel Johnson, who evidently practised introspection with courage and honesty — which can hardly be said of Locke, Bentham and many other Liberals — is reported to have said: "I hate mankind for I think myself one of the best of them, and I know how bad I am." (*Johnsoniana*, by Mrs. Piozzi). And this reminds us of that candid thinker, Pascal, who a century earlier had maintained, "*Le moi est haissable*" and "*Le vraie et unique vertu est donc de se haïr,*" in his *Pensees* ("Our ego is detestable" and "The only true virtue is to hate oneself.")

Both Alexander von Humboldt and our own George Moore appear to have known enough about themselves to hold human nature in poor esteem; for the former declared, "I despise mankind in all classes" (*Memoirs*), and the latter hoped that when his hour came he might be able to turn his face to the wall and boast, "I have not increased the evil of human life." (*Confession of a Young Man*, XIII, iii).

In any case, one would have thought that every intellectually honest, middle-aged man and woman would have learnt enough about themselves and their fellow-creatures to hold but a poor opinion of mankind and to feel certain that, if one is called upon to govern, it is wiser and safer to side with Machiavelli and Hume than with Locke and Bentham.

The most cursory acquaintance with Man's history and with recent events in our Western World, should suffice to convince the least realistic observer of humanity that many of the greatest disasters that have befallen our race have been the outcome of a mistaken view of the character of Man. And when we look about us to-day and see the steadily soaring incidence of crimes of violence, of wanton cruelty and of wilful vandalism and dishonesty, in a society in which poverty and privation have been largely eliminated, it is difficult not to form the conclusion that all this defiance of Law and Order in a community which has practically banished the motives we used to think conduced to lawlessness, is in itself, apart from other evidence available elsewhere, an indication that modern Man, has, owing to a much too favourable estimate of his fellows, been indulging for the last few decades in an orgy of mistaken benevolence and leniency based on a fallacious psychological principle.

We have but to think of a sentimentalist like the late Alexander Paterson in this connection, in order to be satisfied that both the provisions and the administration of the Law, have for many years been in the wrong hands.

When we think that hardly thirty years ago, at the peak of the period of maudlin benevolence which began in the last decades of the nineteenth century, a widely read and in his day, very influential writer like G. K. Chesterton was able to thank God that he was no psychologist a boast that was unfortunately deplorably true (See his *Autobiography*, Chap. II); and that in spite of this honest admission both he and his friend Belloc never ceased to pontificate on political issues, can we wonder that our society is now revealing all the morbid signs of having long been led by men with a false estimate of Man's nature?

In the crucial debate on the nature of Man, all Liberals have argued that he is born good and that consequently Popular Government could have only desirable results. Poets like Wordsworth, philosophers like Bentham and Rousseau, and all women, joined in the chorus proclaiming mankind's inveterate harmlessness and lack of guile.

As already indicated, however, Liberals, especially in England, had no alternative. Heterodox as the point of view was even from the Christian standpoint, they were forced to adopt if, for otherwise how could they advocate Popular Government? In any case, at no time in the history of their Movement, was any one of them shrewd enough to appreciate how much more sound psychologically was Christianity's estimate of Man than that professed by their leaders. The formidable criticism of those realists who saw in Liberalism, besides a pessimistic and premature rejection of all hope of regenerating the national *élite*, a policy which would inevitably lead to mob tyranny and anarchy — this criticism had to be answered, and the only retort with which the Liberals could justify their claims amounted to a flat denial of what Machiavelli, Hume, Hobbes, Luther, Baxter and Milton and Christianity alleged.

With emphasis, therefore, they pronounced Man fundamentally good, by which they meant that his envy of all forms of superiority, his malice, his instinctive aggressiveness, self-indulgence and secret indifference to the public good when it was incompatible with his own advantage all these traits were exceptional enough to be ignored.

No Liberal could have been more painfully aware of the compulsory nature of this apologetic retort than Rousseau; for, whilst with one corner of his mouth he lisped that men were born good, with the other he warned his generation that *"quand un homme feint de préférer mon intérêt au sien propre, que quelque démonstration qu'il colore ce mensonge, je suis sur qu'il en fait un. "*(*Confessions*, Livre V: "When a man pretends to prefer my interest before his own, no matter how he may deck out this falsehood, I remain convinced that he has lied.") Rousseau was no fool. He must have known how damaging this warning was to the belief that human goodness would make Popular Government redound to the public weal.

Locke was more consistent. But was he as honest? For although he championed the school which Rousseau was later to join, he never let such a tremendous cat out of the Liberal bag. Perhaps he merely had less psychological flair than his disciple and was thus able with unruffled composure to advocate popular Government. As Phyllis

Doyle says, "Locke's belief in human nature . . . led him to advocate a democratic form of government." (*A History of Political Thought*, Chap. X). It led him even further, for he was one of the first to argue that Man's native goodness becomes corrupted only through the influence of environment.

By the second half of the seventeenth century, it struck the more enlightened political thinkers of England that in practice Liberalism assumed the existence of a nation composed of saints or at least of wise and virtuous men.

L'Estrange, for instance (1616–1704) quite properly maintained that "Our fierce champions of a free state presuppose great unity, great probity, great purity". And Harrington (1611–1677) defended the idea of democracy only because he believed in an "inexhaustible supply of worthy and capable men ready to participate in government, and that men were good and wise enough always to choose the good."

As I have already pointed out, however, the Liberals had no alternative. They either had to abandon their political principles, or else profess a belief in Man's natural immaculacy. As F. M. Cornford was later to maintain, "To believe in democracy you must believe in the essential goodness of common humanity." (*The Unwritten Philosophy*, 1950, Chap. IV). Whilst Santayana claimed quite reasonably that "If a noble, civilised democracy is to subsist, the common citizen must be something of a saint and something of a hero." (*The Life of Reason*, 1950).

Rousseau, on the other hand, whilst recognising that a democracy must presuppose a highly virtuous community, denied on that account that it was a feasible form of government. "Were there a people of gods", he said, "their government would be democratic. So perfect a government is not for men." (*Le Contrat Social*, Chap. IV).

If Man is by nature bad, in the sense described on p. 67, and can conform to the conventions of social life only by controlling instincts which, even after 10,000 years of civilised life, still exert a baneful influence over his behaviour, what about forms of government other than the Liberal and Democratic? Can the rulers in a Monarchy, or an Aristocracy, being human, be otherwise than bad?

Naturally, they cannot. And for this reason it is just as romantic and at variance with the few wise polities of past Ages, to found a Monarchy, an Oligarchy, an Aristocracy, or any other governing *élite*, on the hope of its being just and wise, without framing any measure calculated to ensure that it will be so, as to assume a like freedom from evil in self-

rule by the Populace. The native iniquity of Man does not shrink from manifesting itself simply because it happens to be allied with superior intelligence, education and material resources; for all such advantages merely multiply the means and opportunities to make ill deeds done.

Yet, strangely enough, just as few modern Liberal policies have thought of providing against the natural iniquity of Man, so in the whole history of civilisation have few Monarchies Aristocracies taken steps to restrict the evil propensities of sovereigns and nobles. It is as if in this sphere the psychological fallacies committed by Liberal philosophers had been anticipated, if not excelled by most political philosophers throughout history when establishing the principles according to which government by minorities should be conducted.

It may be objected that as monarchs are not in their own realms members of any group of peers, they have no colleagues who can watch, censor and control their conduct. This is true. But in the Middle Ages, the Church often functioned as a Super-Monarch and actually kept a strict watch on kings who, by virtue of their lonely office, had no equals in their own land to call them to order.

Not that the Church always discharged this duty wisely or fairly. But it certainly tried to meet a need no other institution in Christendom was capable of meeting. We have but to recall the pressure exerted on Henry II in 1172 to force him to purge himself of the guilt of Becket's death in December 1170; and more particularly the staggering feat of St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan who, in 390 A.D. refused to admit the Emperor Theodosius the Great of Rome to the Eucharist till he had entered Milan Cathedral to do public penance for having punished a riot in Thessalonica by the wholesale massacre of 7,000 of its inhabitants.

Inevitably, however, the power of the Church to function as a Super-Monarch and to control the conduct of European sovereigns in accordance with the accepted code of ethics, depended for its efficacy on two factors which were by no means likely to remain permanent — lust, a fervent belief on the part of all Christendom in the sanctity and justice of the Holy Church and in the absolute truth of all its doctrines; and secondly, what was even more important, the certainty of being able to rely on the ready and active support of other sovereigns when one of their number had incurred the disapproval of the Church and required to be called to order.

Owing to the ephemerality of these two factors, the Church's power to castigate an offending ruler and bring him to book was therefore

short-lived and by the beginning of the sixteenth century may be said to have become extinct. When, for instance, John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester was executed on Tower Hill in June 1535 because he had refused to acknowledge Henry VIII's supremacy in the English Church, Pope Paul III, who had created the bishop presbyter cardinal only a month previously, was terribly shocked. He was in fact so furious that he intimated his intention of depriving Henry of his kingdom and accordingly wrote to all the different powers of Europe asking them to help him to give effect to his sentence. Yet, although Bishop Fisher's execution was one of the most serious affronts ever given to the Holy See, there was no adequate response and Pope Paul had to consume his wrath in impotent silence.

Again, when some thirty-five years later, Pope Pius V issued a Bull deposing "that servant of all iniquity, Elizabeth pretended Queen of England" and absolving all Catholics from their allegiance to her, this invitation to Catholic Europe to crusade against the heretic Queen also proved a failure, and the Authority and prestige of the Church received another of the blows which revealed its dwindling power as a super-monarchical censor.

In the attitude of the ancient prophets of Israel to their kings there was some presage of this Church practice. But when in Europe the Church lost its ascendancy, Monarchy in the hands of ruffians like Henry VIII of England and Louis XV of France — not to mention many others — easily degenerated into irresponsible despotism; and the principal of Kingship by Divine Right, by obscuring the human and therefore basically evil nature of every monarch, left a badly governed people no other redress than revolt.

How the obsessional basileiophobia of a people like the English, ultimately sought safety in a world no longer possessing any Super Monarchical influence, by improvising a sort of bogus kingship, known as a "Constitutional Monarchy", in which the monarch's power and influence, as Mr. Herman Finer has maintained, are reduced to "practically nothing but a purple rubber stamp", would take too long to tell (See *Governments of Great European Powers*, Chap. 9: The Government of Gt. Britain). Suffice it to say that, much as it may surprise many people, the ultimate evanescence of true Monarchy in Europe may not have been unconnected with the collapse of the Church's super monarchical functions, imperfectly as these were often performed.

And the same remark applies to the slow but steady downfall of all aristocratic power. It was the failure of the aristocrats themselves

to organise within their own body a central Watch Committee, or Disciplinary Board, which could rebuke, censure and if necessary demote and disrobe any member of their order who proved unworthy of his exalted rank and undeserving of its privileges, which without a shadow of a doubt was the principal cause of aristocratic failure and therefore of the decline of aristocratic influence and prestige in all European States except perhaps two. But of this anon.

Summing up, therefore, it seems correct to conclude that among the chief causes which have brought about the evanescence of Monarchical and Aristocratic rule, have not been any inherent vice in these institutions themselves, but rather their lack of any arrangements within their systems which would operate as a check or brake upon that native iniquity of Man, which, whether in a king, a noble, or a plebeian, is equally prone to manifest itself and cause havoc if left uncontrolled.

Then, in what respect is Democracy essentially inferior to Monarchy or Aristocracy? If all men are naturally inclined to evil, why should Democracy be necessarily more fruitful of evil than Monarchy or Aristocracy?

— Merely because — as the average alert reader will already have inferred — whereas it is possible to control and censor Kings and Nobles, and whereas history gives us examples of nations where this has been successfully done, it is and always has been utterly impossible to control the vagaries, shortcomings, errors and actual vices of a whole populace — that is to say, of the voting mob, when it is functioning as a ruling body. No system therefore has ever yet been devised whereby the misrule of mobs can be mitigated or controlled, and this, apart from all the other objections that can be advanced against Democracy, is absolutely insuperable.

In short, the fatal objection to Democracy is this: it excludes all possible means of correcting or neutralising the effects of the natural iniquity of Man as manifested in the domain of politics, because in this kind of polity the iniquity in question is concealed in an unidentifiable and anonymous national mob, which cannot even be disciplined or brought to book for its blunders or deliberate malice, let alone shot or beheaded.

X: Left-Wing English Utopia

England's historical record reveals her as having been the hotbed of Liberalism in Europe. Three times — in 1527, 1471 and 1649 — she set Europe the example of Regicide; ever since the late seventeenth century she has flaunted the mirage of Constitutional Monarchy before Europe's gaze and may be said to have started the vogue for this bogus form of Kingship; whilst as I hope to show, from the early sixteenth century, she has had no need of a German Marx or a Russian Lenin to prompt her in propounding the most subversive principles of Radicalism and Communism.

Never having had any experience of a true Aristocracy, or understood what such a regimen meant and how it could be secured; and never, until the day before yesterday having appreciated the indispensability of a Tone Setting *élite* if the nation's way or life is to be kept decent and dignified, England has up to the present even failed to recognise the essential functions of a Second Chamber within the framework of her pet political improvisation — Limited Monarchy. For as early as 1648, in a pamphlet sometimes attributed to Winstanley, it is argued that the restitution of the People's Rights will be achieved only by putting down all "tyrants" who "are called Dukes, Marquesses, Earls, Barons, Lords etc." (*Light Shining in Buckinghamshire*).

As already indicated, the besetting sin of the Liberal philosophers has been that they have always lacked psychological insight, and built their house upon the sand of a mistaken view of humanity in the mass.

To this day, despite all that the New Psychology, general experience, and bitter fruits of Liberal errors have taught us, people of influence whose opinions have weight may still be found who abide by the superstition indispensable to democratic theory that Man is born good. Thus, a popular author like Edward Carpenter apparently added his voice to the chorus chanting their belief in the natural goodness of Man. (*Contemporary Rev.* June 1958: article by Frederic Vanson). John Cowper Powys, who was old enough to know better, told us in 1947, "I hold that men and women are naturally good, naturally kind." (*Obstinate Cymric*, Essay 10). Whilst one dear creature, actually

engaged in teaching and not at all wishing to be humorous, maintains that "a school is only free when teachers believe that children are essentially good." (*Modern Education of Young Children*, by Mary Catty, 1938). It is just as if we had learnt nothing since Marchmont Needham (1620–1678, in the middle of the seventeenth century, exclaimed hot-headedly, "The people are never at fault! "

Wholly ignored is Freud's caution that young humanity, exclusively under the empire of the Pleasure Principle, is unfit for society until it has undergone the rigid discipline of the Reality Principle. Wholly ignored too is the denial of the alleged "innocence" of children by such rare Englishmen as Samuel Johnson, Browning and Herbert Spencer, and by the more enlightened of French psychologists. Even more surprising is the complete disregard of the Church's mystical anticipation of Freud — its doctrine that we are born in Sin and can achieve righteousness only by an act of Grace.

In this respect, Modern Thought with its democratic bias in favour of human goodness, is inferior to that of the Middle Ages; and, according to Phyllis Doyle, the deterioration occurred in Hobbe's lifetime; for whereas in his youth belief in Man's native iniquity was the mark of orthodoxy, in his old age it was "the stigma of atheism." (*A History of Political Thought*, Chap. IX).

How right therefore is F. L. Lucas in maintaining that "The Age of Reason owed some of its most fatal mistakes to bad psychology." Fascinating, however, is the way the light of truth sometimes pierces the fog of Liberal sophistry owing to the inconsistencies of some of its pundits. Rousseau, as we have seen, gave us two instances of this. But even more astonishing is Harold Laski's admission equally damaging to the democratic myth. "Men", he said, "prefer sacrifice by others to the surrender of their own desires." (*Communism*, Chap. IV, 6).

A political philosophy postulating the desiderata; Freedom, Equality, the Right of Private Judgment and Mob-Voting, coup-led with a misunderstanding of the Sanctity of Private Property, a loss of faith in the possibility of Higher Men, and the belief in the Goodness of Man, inevitably inclined the ill-informed to Communism.

As early as Wycliffe's day, as we have seen, Property Rights were already being questioned. But 200 years later England was ringing with the clamour of agitators who to-day would be welcomed with open arms in Moscow's Red Square. We have seen that no material differences distinguish Liberalism (Locke's altitude) with us doctrine of the unconditional disponibility of property, from the belief that

the best administrator of all wealth is the impersonal State; for both views imply a vulgar disregard of the Sanctity of Private Property, it is therefore hardly surprising that the early Liberals, besides believing as Locke ultimately did in "the inherent value of the majority's judgment", should also have professed their misunderstanding of the Sanctity of Private Property by demanding its abolition.

Men like Hartlib, Chamberlen, W. Walwyn, and especially Winstanley, were all frankly communistic. Chamberlen recommended the "nationalisation of all Crown and Church possessions." Walwyn maintained that things would "never be well till all things were common", and in the sophisticated style later affected by G. B. Shaw, he argued that when once Communism had abolished property, "there would be no need of government, for there would be no thieves or criminals." I always deplore that Bernard Shaw did not live to see the Welfare State in operation. He would have had his own shallowness brought home to him by the enormous increase in crime of all kinds which has accompanied the practical evanescence of poverty.

Winstanley, who published his *Law of Freedom in a Platform* in 1652, even anticipated the seductively plausible Marxian slogan: "From each according to his powers and to each according to his needs," and as the populace had supported Parliament in destroying the Oppressor he said, "The spoils should be equally divided between those who went to war and those who stayed at home and paid for them." (See for these and similar facts, Dr. G. P. Gooch's *English Democratic Ideals in the 17th Century*, Chap. VII, 2).

Dr. Gooch points out that Locke "provided the theoretic basis of Socialism" but the ground plan of a frankly Socialistic polity was conceived, if not actually elaborated, long before Locke was born.

Thus we see that neither Russia nor Marx has anything to teach England in the nature of political utopianism of a Leftish brand. And modern England shows us whither these wild illusions have led. Anarchy is rampant. Utter chaos is only round the corner. Despite the affluence spread throughout all classes, crime increases by leaps and bounds, and criminal propensities are given full play from an early age. Diabolical cruelly to animals, wanton destruction of public property, and dangerous interference with railway signals and lines, have become the habitual pastimes of the children; but without arousing in the adult masses any idea of mending their courses, improving their home discipline, or of modifying their views about the alleged native goodness of Man.

With Representative Democracy established on a Party basis, so that it has become the business of an officially remunerated Opposition leader to thwart and oppose every measure of the Party in power, no matter how urgently such a measure may be needed or how wise its provisions may be, we have a situation in which no long-term policy of any far-reaching value has the remotest chance of coming into effect. For, as all political Parties compete for Power and have unremittingly to woo the ignorant, self-seeking multitude of Voters, no Party dares to propose any measure likely to give its opponents the opportunity of fomenting indignation against it; with the result that, at the next General Election, it might be unsaddled. This means that measures too wise and, in their provisions, too profound to be understood and appreciated by the masses, or too deficient in governmental largesse for the mob, stand little chance of being proposed or adopted.

Thus, although people often deny that a true Democracy exists in England, no one could deny that to-day we are enjoying the fullest benefits of an ochlocratic tyranny from which no popular insurrection can possibly release us. For the ultimate arbiter of every general policy, the final judge of every particular measure, is the common populace, in whom the Power of making and unmaking Governments ultimately resides, and whose intellectual, educational and characterological limitations set the bounds to every legislative proposal a government may advance.

This explains why the virtues, taste and degree of decency of the multitude now receive no attention and suffer no tutelary influence. It also explains why discipline, which is so urgently needed, receives no attention; for in the first place it makes no appeal to women who constitute the majority of the voters, and secondly by the Left's deliberate association of all officially imposed discipline with so-called "Fascism", it is generally frowned upon by all those who wish to appear good democrats and enlightened Neo-British "Lovers of Freedom".

Hard work, frugality and probity, although not extinct, are moribund. Self-indulgence, vain ostentation and hedonism are the fashion, and the cultivation of these propensities starts in infancy. Emotion is the presiding influence in every political conference and in the choice of every course of action. Hence the crowd and alas! too often their leaders as well, habitually mistake a lump in their throats for a thought. Whilst on the one hand, vandalism and violence prevail among the youth of the nation, on the other one hears of a High Court judge who, in acquitting a girl who was proved to be an accomplice in

a grossly criminal act, addressed her twice as "my dear" and appealed to her in the dulcet tones of a parson preparing a flapper for her first communion.

And as the educated minority among the female voting masses are still too acutely conscious of the famous fight their sex waged for the Suffrage to dream of relinquishing the democratic superstition. Liberalism and all its institutional creations are so firmly established that nothing except total havoc is likely to expose its folly to the nation.

XI: Religious and Political Sophistry

David Owen Ewan tells us that Marx maintained "quite correctly that Communism is not of German but of British and French origin." (*Social Romanticism in France*, p. 55). But even if this logical outcome of Liberalism flourished in France, we should not forget that it was planted there by French idealists who imported it from England. Voltaire and Montesquieu both contracted the infection in England between the years 1726 and 1730, and forthwith spread it among their own countrymen.

It was doubtless with reference to this fact that Joubert, commenting on the political philosophy of modern Europe, exclaimed, *"C'est de l'Angleterre que sont parties comme des brouillards les idées métaphysiques et politiques qui ont tout obscurci."* (*Pensées: Du Caractère des Nations*, LXXVIII, Ed. 1842: "From England there have spread like fogs the metaphysical and political ideas that have covered everything in darkness.").

Stendhal more angrily declared England to be *"La source unique de la plus intolérable partie des malheurs de l'Europe.* (*Pages D'Italie*, Oct–Nov. 1818: "The one and only source of the most insufferable misfortunes of Europe.")

There was undoubtedly much culpable superficiality in the enthusiasm felt and expressed by Voltaire and Montesquieu for the Liberalism of England's political institutions in the third decade of the eighteenth century — a superficiality admitted by Montesquieu (See Livre XI, Chap. VI, of his *L'Esprit des Lois.*) and accounted for in Voltaire's case by the events preceding his journey to England. It will be remembered that towards the end of the year 1725, he had a serious quarrel with the Chevalier de Rohan, in which many insults were exchanged, and one night, as Voltaire was leaving the Duc de Sully's where he had dined, he was pounced upon by some ruffians hired by the Chevalier and severely bastinadoed.

His subsequent defiance at his persecutor led to his confinement in the Bastille, and it was only after his release from prison, when he was still smarting from the affront and the castigation he had suffered, that

he came to England. It is not surprising, therefore, that he was inclined to take a rose-coloured view of any régime other than that of France.

It is however, strange that neither of these cultivated French visitors to England saw in the early basic assumptions of English Liberalism any menace to order and sound government, For Hobbes, some eighty years before Voltaire set foot on England, had already denounced as "poisonous and seditious" the belief that the mob was a competent tribunal to which every question however abstruse could be submitted. He said it constituted "a disease of the commonwealth", for "a man's conscience and his judgment is the same thing, and as the judgment so also the conscience may be erroneous . . . in such diversity as there is of private consciences the commonwealth must needs be distracted." (*Leviathan*, Chap. XXIX).

Cromwell himself, four years earlier had exclaimed on seeing Lilburne's demand for Universal Suffrage (*Argument of the People*, 1647): "The consequences of this rule tend to anarchy, must end in anarchy. For where is there any bound or limit set if you take away this [limit] that men that have no interest but the interest of breathing shall have no voice in elections?" (Words pronounced at an Army Council on October 29th 1647. See *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, Ed. by S. C. Lomas, 1904. Vol. III).

Even more remarkable were the reactions of the two leading religious Reformers themselves to the practical consequences of their doctrines. For both Calvin and Luther recoiled in horror when they saw their Liberal innovations in the religious sphere translated into the world of politics. Confronted by the truculent effrontery of the German masses who had interpreted his purely anti-clerical campaign as an incitement to them to rebel against their civil rulers, he not only recanted, but with apparent inconsistency and excessive harshness also denied the light of the People to offer armed resistance under his banner to the State. In his furious pamphlet, *Wider die Zäuberischen und Mörderischen Rotten der Bauern* (*Contra The Peasant Bands of Robbers and Murderers*, 1525), he practically abjured all that he had previously contended on the liberty of conscience and judgment, and advocated the most drastic measures for crushing the masses whom his religious Liberalism had inspired. We have but to read Goethe's *Goetz von Berlichingen* (Act V) in order to learn how savage were the means adopted for quelling the insurrection for which Luther's revolt against the Church had been largely responsible. "Men were burnt alive," says Goethe, "hundreds were broken on the wheel, impaled, beheaded and

quartered. The whole land became a shambles in which human flesh was as cheap as dirt!" Funck-Brentano estimates the number of deaths as at least 100,000. (*Luther* Trans. 1936, Chap. XVIII).

Calvin was driven to the same doctrinal inconsistency; but with less tragic consequences. Nevertheless, for a Reformer such as he was, to maintain, as Rousseau was later to do, that Aristocracy is the best form of government and that "in popular government is the strongest tendency to sedition and anarchy", indicates the extent to which in those early days of Liberal speculation the innovators were already shrinking from the consequences of their own principles, which, as soon became apparent, could not easily be regarded as irrelevant to politics.

All honour to these two religious Reformers for recognising the flaws in their reasoning when once it was applied outside the narrow limits of its original purpose. But when we find Calvin on the one hand, predicting anarchy as the fatal outcome of Democracy, and on the other, Luther declaring that "To the business of government appertain not common illiterate people, or servants, but champions, understanding, wise and courageous men who are to be trusted" (*Table Talk*, DCCLXIII): we may well wonder how these doughty pioneers of free thought and opinion, with their emphasis on every individual man's right to his own judgment in matters of theology, could have persuaded themselves that whilst Liberalism in religion is wholly commendable, it is to be deprecated in politics. Did they really imagine that religion was less sacred, less precious than secular government?

Yet it was from such shallow innovators who thus inadvertently betrayed their faint regard for the Faith they pretended to revere that, as we have seen, English political Liberalism derived.

This is not to suggest that the Church against which they campaigned was faultless. Nor is it an argument in defence of Catholicism *per se*; but the facts as I have related them certainly entitle us to conclude that, like the hostile reaction to a depraved Aristocracy, the revolt against the mediaeval Church, was led by an intelligentsia which, in its haste to abolish abuses, failed to discover the best and most rewarding road to Reform, and thus only created fresh evils which it became the task of a late posterity to overcome. For, if, as we have seen, the band of militant Reformers were capable of supposing that Liberalism in Religion was commendable, how could the common people and their lay intellectuals help inferring from the intrepid claims for freedom and emancipation in the most sacred matters of all, that in matters

less sacred the same Liberalism was equally, if not a thousand times more, justified and laudable?

This popular inference, like the original Movement of Emancipation, may have been hasty, superficial, and characteristic of the "snap" judgments for which crowds have always been notorious. But, given the circumstances, it was only to be expected even from the supposed "intellectuals" among the mob. For to this day the kind of people who flatter themselves that they are qualified to lead their fellow men are too often, as Julien Benda has so ably shown, betrayers rather than saviours of their generation.

XII: Cloud-cuckoo Liberal Inhumanity

"Liberty consists," said John Stuart Mill over 100 years ago, "in doing whatever one wishes only so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it." (*Liberty*, 1859, Intro.).

This sounds eminently sensible and just. But, little as a hasty reader of the passage may suspect, it contains a fallacy. For it is not necessary to "attempt to deprive others of theirs" in order indirectly to do so. In other words, the liberty to do "whatever one wishes" may in countless ways "impede" the efforts of others to obtain it without one's wishing to be in the least deliberately obstructive or obtrusive. To state an extreme case, no one to-day can choose to make life on earth a Hell for himself without creating, however unintentionally, an inferno for his neighbours.

Even if, as Bentham frivolously supposed, "there is no one knows what is for your interest as well as yourself" (*Manual of Political Economy*, 1798), Mill's proviso would still be wanting. But we know that Bentham was talking nonsense. Thirty minutes spent in any street, park or public place in England amply suffices to convince any one of that. "To suppose that a man is necessarily the best judge in what concerns him most," said de Quincey, "is a sad *non sequitur*; for if self-interest ensured wisdom no one could ever go wrong in anything." (*Posthumous Works*, 1891, XXIV, Brevia). Similarly, J. M. Keynes, speaking on the end of*laissez faire* (1926), remarked, "nor is it true that self-interest generally is enlightened."

John Jelley gave the game away when he maintained that "if democracy has any meaning, it should mean a society where we can all choose our own way to hell or heaven." (*Daily Mail* 14.2.61). Quite so! But I repeat, can we choose to go to Hell without the eternal furnaces singeing some of our fellows?

Even more fantastic is the extension of Bentham's principle to the extreme of assuming that every man is also capable of judging what

is best for his fellow nationals. For the fact that Liberalism entrusts our destiny to our neighbours, however ill-informed, self-seeking, or mentally defective they may be, exposes us to a tyranny at least as sinister and absolute as any aristocratic despotism has ever been. Even granting that these neighbours may be capable of judging what is best for us, would they necessarily be scrupulous enough to keep our advantage foremost in their minds when exercising their political rights?

"Everyone voted at an election for one reason only," Monckton Milnes declared in 1842, "because they realised that some benefit would accrue to themselves or their own interests from the policy of the favoured candidate" (*Thoughts on Purity of Elections*). We have already seen what Rousseau had to say on this subject (See Chap. VII); whilst Montesquieu, in spite of his fervent raptures over English Parliamentarism, believed that "People imagine, but it is never the case, that the electors seek the public welfare, whereas it is only their private interest." (*Voyages de Montesquieu*, Quart. Rev. No. 379).

Although Liberals have always kept their heads high enough up in the clouds to think otherwise, it is very doubtful whether the majority of the electorate would ever go to the polls at all unless they had some private interest to serve by registering their vote. Yet, not more than twenty-six years after Monckton Milnes made the above-mentioned remark, Samuel Morley, a cultivated and deeply religious man, the friend of Gladstone, felt able whilst in full possession of his mental faculties to say in an election address at Bristol, "I do not so distrust the character of Englishmen to fear that they will employ their newly acquired privilege, (i.e. the extension of the franchise provided by the Reform Bill of 1867) for selfish and unworthy purposes."

To-day, almost a century after Morley expressed this astonishing point of view, we have but to reflect on the universal signs of popular indifference to Public Welfare, as manifested in the vandalism daily reported in our Press, in the complete disregard shown by the average holiday-makers of the comfort or pleasure of those who are likely to follow them on any beach, beauty-spot or rural retreat, and the complete failure of parents to inculcate public spirit on their children, in order to satisfy ourselves that the Liberal assumptions about the potency of modern Man's social instincts is but a fond myth.

But to return to the principle enunciated by Mill, quoted at the beginning of the chapter, to the effect that freedom consists in doing whatever one wishes only so long as we do not attempt to deprive

others of theirs etc. It is surely obvious that there are any number of ways by which we can and do deprive others of their liberty and impede their efforts to obtain it, without our *ever consciously or deliberately* attempting to do so.

Take for instance the present widespread and insensate practice of pandering to the unbridled self-indulgence of children by gorging them incessantly with sweetstuffs of all kinds. We are now the greatest consumers of sugar and sweetstuffs in the world, and in addition we are probably also the greatest sufferers from all kinds of dental troubles which begin early in infancy when the milk teeth have not yet been replaced by the permanent dentition. Can anyone be so simple-minded as to suppose that this freedom to ruin children's teeth, although by no means constituting a deliberate attempt on the part of stupid parents to curtail other people's freedom, nevertheless does not fail to do so? How about the school and other dental services? Would the annual bill of hundreds of millions paid to meet the cost of the nation's widespread morbidity not be reduced if the dental services alone were less heavy? And is not every taxpayer's freedom therefore inadvertently impeded and curtailed by this one exercise of freedom by stupid parents? Who pays for the extraction every year of the 4 tons of teeth drawn from children's jaws? (See *Times*, 12.4.66).

Similarly, we can point to the chiropody services of our hospitals. The freedom women enjoy to deform and damage their feet from the time of adolescence onwards by wearing monstrously unwise footwear, has given rise to a widespread demand for expert chiropodical treatment, which often becomes an urgent necessity long before middle age is reached. Bunions, hammer toes, ingrowing toe-nails, hallux rigidus and hallux valgus, are all afflictions that begin to appear soon after adolescence. Even ten years ago, at a time when stiletto shoes had not yet been introduced, it was found that in a factory employing 358 workers, 30 *per cent* of the women (still quite young) had some kind of foot trouble; the principal cause being bunions and hallux valgus. (*The British Medical Journal*, 3.10.53). Anybody who imagines that this freedom to wear ridiculously unwise footgear does not, however unintentionally, deprive other people of their freedom, or impede it, by increasing the financial burdens of the nation, has failed to think too much purpose on the whole problem of freedom.

Then we have the motor-car addiction, with the temptation it offers to neglect bodily exercise whilst in no way limiting food intake. To behold the stream of owner drivers taking to the highway on Sunday

mornings with their families or friends, and adjusting their speed to the appetite they expect it to engender for the substantial meals awaiting them at midday, is at once to understand, or at least to be able to account for, the enormous demand for medical services to treat the widespread digestive disturbances, insomnia, and heart troubles, ultimately induced by the twofold error consisting of inadequate healthy activity and over-eating.

No purpose can be served by adducing further examples of the indirect and inadvertent form, under a Democracy, of "impeding" other people's efforts to be free. The reader will be able to think of countless imbecilities on the part of the multitude to-day, which effectually limit his own enjoyment of freedom, the most scandalous of which is, of course, the Parliamentary vote itself, whereby any majority in the land may tyrannise over their neighbours and extort contributions from them, all of which amount to gross violations of their liberty.

Thus we have seen that two of the most cherished principles of Liberalism have no foundation whatsoever:

1. There is no truth in Bentham's belief that people are the best judges of what serves their own interest. On the contrary, as a general rule, people form habits and pursue courses which ultimately prove to have been utterly opposed to their own advantage.

2. There are no possible means whatsoever, under a Democracy, of safeguarding individual freedom from those impediments to, and violation of it which inevitably and frequently occur, without those who are responsible for them having made the slightest deliberate or conscious attempt to obstruct or limit their neighbour's free choice of action, or free command of their resources. Consequently the Freedom alleged to be the reward of Liberalism turns out to be largely mythical, and Mill's proviso purporting to provide a safeguard against its curtailment, shows that he could not have viewed the question comprehensively.

Nor, in a liberal society, is the unintentional violation by one person of another person's liberty, the only form which this kind of violation can take. For there is, and cannot help being, much involuntary self-injury perpetrated in this manner. Where ignorant majorities, ill-equipped and unable to take a long-term view of the policies and legislative measures to which they give their sanction at General Elections, are called upon to approve or disapprove of political programmes submitted to them by demagogic Parliamentary candidates, they may by their vote easily do themselves and their posterity grievous injury

without in the least having wished to do so. Indeed, they may and often do thus bring harm on themselves whilst desiring and intending to do the very reverse, and the occurrence of such involuntary self-damage seems to be inevitable in any system of government organised on democratic lines.

As an old Victorian, I have seen in the paltry space of only 8 decades what was once a people of considerable and impressive merit, a nation composed of an independent, thrifty and self-respecting race which courageously discharged its own obligations, insisted on standing on its own feet, and refused to owe charity to any man, so that the poorest were ashamed to solicit parish aid and refrained from doing so for as long as possible — I have seen, I say, this race transformed almost overnight into a populace expert in shifting its every legitimate burden and responsibility on the backs of its neighbours; in battening on legally enforced State charities, and in accepting subsidies even for performing the primitive function of procreation, and the irresponsible act of fornication.

The havoc wrought in the character of this once proud people in the last three generations has now become apparent in every department of their lives. Self-respect, self-help and independence are dead. Over-indulgence of every kind, if possible at other people's expense, is the order of the day, and begins in infancy.

The whole population aims chiefly at obtaining something for nothing. Vulgar ostentation is everywhere rife; for money easily come by is readily squandered.

Because discipline is now regarded as not quite "English" and is thought to reek of "Fascism", hooliganism and insensate aggressiveness are the favourite expressions of "Freedom" in the youth of the nation. Crimes of violence increase by leaps and bounds. Many more large-scale robberies and armed raids are perpetrated than the police can deal with, and relatively few of those guilty of them are brought to justice.

Blackmail, levied under threats of intolerable public inconvenience and privation, is the accepted method of increasing the weekly pay packet and reducing the hours of labour. And the effrontery with which doles of all kinds, including those for compensating uncontrolled individual lust, are pocketed by people of both sexes arouses no indignation. It is as if the original fibre of the nation's character sedulously built up by the more civilised conditions of the past, had rotted and perished.

And how have these deplorable changes come about? — Need we ask? — Certainly not through any deliberate fault on the part of the masses. And he who can blame them for the deterioration that has taken place in their character misunderstands the functions of government and the responsibility resting on the shoulders of those who undertake the political leadership of their fellows. Can anyone be so simple as to suppose that national majorities composed of ordinary people, deprived of the example that should be given them by a Tone-Setting *élite* of their own flesh and blood, can perform the immensely difficult task of self-determination without the risk of self-injury (self-deterioration), especially when they embark on the undertaking under the influence of emotions and desires whipped up by rival demagogues? Would the common people be human if they avoided such self-injury by resisting the lures, cajolements and seductive promises of these political representatives?

As Salvador de Madariaga, speaking of demagogy alone, so well says: It tends "to involve prejudice, passions and emotions which deform the highly complex problems of the nation's collective life" and to "indulge in electoral outbidding which does not hesitate to sacrifice the good of the country and even the long-term interests of the electors, to their own immediate and apparent interests." (*Democracy versus Liberty*, 1958, Chap. XI, 7).

It is this aspect of the Liberal ideology which reveals its essential inhumanity and uncharitableness. For it is manifestly unkind and unfair to set ordinary men and women the task of finding the solution to problems both political and social, of which they are unable to appreciate the immediate, let alone the remote effect on themselves and posterity. The very fact that a statesman like Burke rejected majority rule absolutely, was due chiefly to his insistence on the long-term view in politics.

Yet it is precisely this inhuman, unfair and uncharitable feature of Democracy — its lack of solicitude for the character and ultimate welfare of the mob-majorities to whom it grants the right to determine the measures and policies on which their destiny depends — that Liberal philosophers, historians and politicians consistently overlook. They would be the first to raise an outcry if they saw children allowed to wander unattended through a menagerie, or on a canal bank, or in a busy city thoroughfare. But they see no analogy between this and forsaking an ill-informed and politically illiterate populace to the mercy of their own judgment. Only very exceptionally in the

voluminous literature devoted to the propagation of the Liberal Faith can any reference be found to its fundamental inhumanity.

Strange as it may seem, it was left to a popular thinker like Rousseau to explain to his eighteenth-century contemporaries the inevitability of this inhumane consequence of democracy and the Liberal ideology in general. For, as he pointed out, "*De lui-même le peuple veut toujours le bien, mais de lui-même il ne le voit pas toujours. La volonté générale est toujours droite, mais le jugement qui la guide n'est pas toujours eclairé.*" (*Le Contrat Social*, Livre II, Ch. 6: "The people themselves always desire what is good; but left to themselves they cannot always see it. Their general will is always sound; but the judgment guiding it is not always enlightened.")

Despite the moderation and cautious understatement of these words, they are an excellent example of Rousseau's honesty and his readiness to admit a truth damaging to his general philosophy.

XIII: Heredity and Aristocracy

In order to free their generation from a despotic priesthood, we have seen how the Reformers dared to contend that ministers of religion possessed no special qualities giving them the exclusive right to intervene between Man and God. As Luther put it, "Every man could be his own priest." (*A Treatise Touching the Liberties of a Christian*, Trans. by J. Bull, 1579, p. 31). And from this claim the belief in human equality is supposed to have spread over Europe.

But we need only recall John Ball and his teacher Wycliffe, to be satisfied that as early as the fourteenth century it was already in the air. For the revolt against aristocratic misgovernment, which had been gathering strength for some time, had even then begun to kindle doubts among the intellectuals in the populace concerning the differences assumed to distinguish men born in castles from those born in the hovels of the poor.

The escutcheons of the nobility had so often been blotted that even rustics, daily confronted with the operation of heredity in their farm animals, were easily induced to question whether the possibility of superior family strains could have any parallel in human beings. Never pausing to consider whether their noble rulers had perhaps violated the principles of good breeding which they themselves observed in rearing their thoroughbred pedigree stock, they summarily discredited the idea of inborn superiority in humanity and, complying with the intelligentsia of their day, accepted Equality as the natural state of mankind.

That this was tantamount to a denial of the phenomenon of Heredity did not trouble them. Could not the universal passion of envy always be relied upon to incline the majority of nobodies to accept a doctrine offering such wonderful relief from the ache of covetousness?

Locke, probably more conscious than the less intelligent of his generation, of the extravagance of the claim of Equality among men, tried to impart a veneer of validity to it by arguing that the differences distinguishing human beings were due "more to education than to anything else" (*Some Thoughts of Education*); and Voltaire, echoing

his Liberal master's idea, but with shocking exaggeration, said, "*Il est bien certain que la naissance ne met pas plus de différence entre les hommes qu'entre un âne dont le père portait du fumier et un âne dont le père portait des reliques: l'éducation fait la grande différence.*" (*Anecdotes sur Pierre le Grand*, 1759: "We may be quite sure that birth causes no more differences between men than it does between a young donkey whose sire carted manure and a young donkey whose sire bore sacred relics on his back; it is education that makes the great difference").

Well might F. L. Lucas deplore that "fantastic optimism with which many educators tend to be intoxicated — that curious faith that education can turn sow's ears into silk purses and young cart horses into Derby winners." (*The Search for Good Sense*, Chap. III). It is however only fair to Locke and Voltaire to remember that in their day the oppressed people of Europe were more eager to discredit aristocratic pretensions than to champion Truth. On the very eve of Louis XVI's execution, Thomas Paine was arguing that "an hereditary governor is as inconsistent as a hereditary author. I know not whether Homer or Euclid had sons; but I will venture an opinion that if they had, and left their work unfinished, those sons could not have completed them." (*The Rights of Man*, Chap. III).

This sounded so seductively self-evident to his generation that people had to apologise for questioning it. For what did Paine and his contemporaries know or want to know about families and family line's that belied his glib generalisation? Yet even to-day, two centuries after Paine displayed his deplorable ignorance and the popularisation of Science has made the findings of expert geneticists accessible to the public, we still hear doubts expressed about hereditary influences. And the same gullible people who will spare no pains or money to obtain a dog with a faultless pedigree, wilt meekly bow to the mendacious ruling of UNESCO concerning the insignificance of Race and sound lineage in mankind.

There may have been some excuse for Locke, Voltaire and Paine. For their own and their contemporaries' lack of any biological erudition prevented them from imagining the means by which an *élite* could be regenerated. Indeed, it is only quite recently that prominent Liberals themselves have recognised the feasibility of such means and proposed their adoption in order to re-instate a class (a *souche*) of leaders capable of controlling a régime which would constitute an alternative to Liberalism.

The inevitable sequel to Locke's doctrine of Equality was his advocacy of the Majority's Right to prevail (*Two Treatises on Government*, II, Chap. X) and Bentham, who thought this axiomatic, helped to commit us to our present wholly materialistic belief that Truth, Wisdom and Right belong where the greatest body-weight is to be found.

In an Age where no pains are spared to advertise our devotion to what are called "Spiritual Values", we yet have no compunction in proclaiming to the world at large our faith in the Liberal principle that sound judgment and political sagacity are purely a matter of avoirdupois.

We condemn what our Establishment has taught us to regard as the Fascist and Nazi slogan that Might is Right, whilst at every conference, every General Election and every Parliamentary Session, we unhesitatingly accept the barbarous notion that Right resides where the mightiest mass of human flesh and bones is collected.

Irving Babbitt remarks that "the notion that wisdom resides in a popular majority at any particular moment should be the most completely exploded of all fallacies" (*Democracy and Leadership*, p. 263). But what most needs stressing to-day is that the notion is a flat denial of our claim to be among the leaders of the world in spiritual elevation, and of our right to point the finger of scorn at the Communists for their Dialectical Materialism which they at least have the decency and candour to acknowledge. And it is these two facts that should now be broadcast in the teeth — in the false teeth — of all Liberals, wherever they may be lurking.

Professor Raymond Cattell remarks that "The supporters of the French Revolution, being opposed to an hereditary aristocracy did well to belittle the importance of human heredity." (*An Introduction to Personality Study*, 1950, Chap. II). But as it was only by the operation of the inexorable laws of heredity that the French Aristocracy, like that of the rest of Europe, had declined, its degraded condition confirmed rather than invalidated these laws.

Only if the French aristocracy had remained wise and capable, only if they had preserved their quality, could the importance and reality of heredity have been questioned. For, seeing that they and their peers, almost everywhere in Europe, had consistently violated every rule by which thoroughbred qualities may be preserved and enhanced in family lines, it would have been their retention of exalted qualities, rather than their depravity, which should have warranted profound doubts concerning the operation of hereditary laws.

Thus, the fact that all Liberals of the late eighteenth century inferred from the intellectual and biological bankruptcy of aristocracy that heredity had no importance in human beings, is but a further proof of their inveterate inability to ponder any question, whether of biology, psychology or politics, to any purpose. Not that modern Liberals are any better; for, on the basis of evidence similar to that which their predecessors possessed almost two centuries ago, they too are now denying the importance of Heredity in human breeding. And, in view of all that the world has meanwhile learnt on the subject of genetics, the extraordinary persistence of this error can only be ascribed to our Progress in Stupidity which is among the few real advances we have made in recent times. (For the scientific evidence of the decline in intelligence in our day, see my *Religion for Infidels*, Part I, Chap. I).

XIV: The Tone-Setting Élite

As late as 1775, when Beaumarchais produced his *Barbier de Seville*, there was still no sign in Europe of any understanding of the causes of Aristocracy's consummate failure. Even the aristocrats themselves had no idea of what had brought about their degeneration and disgrace.

Beaumarchais makes Figaro exclaim, "*Un grand nous fait assez de bien quand il nous fait pas de mal.*" (Act I, Sc. II: "The great show us kindness enough when they merely refrain from injuring us."). This was fifteen years after Voltaire had made the shallow remark about heredity quoted in Chapter XI *ante*; and it reveals the exasperation still felt by the French intelligentsia at the ignominy of their national *élite*. But even eighteen years after the first performance of the Beaumarchais' play, English "intellectuals" displayed the same exasperation over their *élite* and, in the political remedies they suggested showed no deeper insight than did their opposite numbers across the Channel.

This can be ascertained by any one who to-day has the perseverance to plod through the 895 pages of what is probably the stupidest book ever written by a modern European — William Godwin's *Inquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) — which memorialises what at the close of the eighteenth century English Liberalism solemnly expected the public to accept as "Thought". In all its 895 quarto pages I was able to discover only one passage which might reasonably pass as sensible, and that is where Godwin attacks the Ballot (Bk. IV, Chap. X).

Starting off with the usual rubbishy assumptions about Man's native goodness (Bk. 1, Chap. III), it proceeds to deny the possibility of any hereditary gifts and attacks Property in wholly Communistic style. "To whom does any article of property, suppose a loaf of bread, belong? — To him who most wants it," says Godwin. (Vol. II, Bk. VII, Chap. 1) "My neighbour", he says, "has as much right to put an end to my existence with a dagger or poison as to deny me that assistance without which I must starve, or as to deny me the pecuniary assistance without which my intellectual attainments or my moral exertions will be materially injured." (Bk. II, Chap. V).

Incredible as it may seem, although this sort of slip-shod theorising is spread over the whole book and should have proved a sufficient safeguard against its popularity, such was the intellectual depravity of the Age that the Government seriously considered prosecuting the Author, and refrained from doing so only because the three guineas he was asking for his book made it inaccessible to the multitude.

Yet the work enjoyed a considerable vogue. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Tom Wedgwood and Crabb Robinson fell under its spell. But only on Shelley — that grossly overrated poet — did it make a lasting impression. In all its staggering benightedness, it was essentially English; for had not that paragon of "sound common sense" and "practical sagacity" — Samuel Johnson — remarked on July 20th 1765 (when Godwin was only 7 years old) about theft, "When we consider by what unjust methods property has been often acquired and that what was unjustly got it must be unjust to keep, where is the harm in one man's taking the property of another from him?" (Boswell's *Johnson*).

Was it this and similar gaffes on the learned Doctor's part that led Ste Beuve to describe him as "the king of clownish pundits"? (*"Le roi des cuistres"*).

At all events, his remark was a noteworthy anticipation of Lenin who, 154 years later, in April 1917, was to incite the mob of St. Petersburg to pillage the possessing classes by exhorting them to "Rob back that which has been robbed! "

The English intelligentsia of the late eighteenth century certainly seems to have been incapable of finding any better solution of the problem of national government than that proposed by the earliest Liberal philosophers. And this was unforgivable in the scholars among them, seeing that they had long had under their eyes Aristotle's informative statement that "Aristocracies are mostly destroyed from virtue not being properly joined to power." (*Politics*' II, Bk. V. 1307a). Here lay the clue to the mystery, and they overlooked it.

The fact that the aristocrats themselves right up to the end of the eighteenth century were guilty of the same oversight, hardly excuses their less noble opponents; for nowhere in the ruling classes of France and England were there any thinkers of the stamp of Locke, Voltaire, Beaumarchais, Samuel Johnson, etc.

Unfortunately, the besetting sin of even the less besotted political thinkers — I do not mean Godwin, because he was *hors concours* in imbecility — has always been to confound the virtues of an institution with the virtues of the personnel trying to run it, as if an atrocious

pianist always implied a bad piano. "No institution," said Emerson, "will be better than the institutor?" (*Essay on Character*). And the fact that he thought it necessary to utter this platitude, reveals to what depths of inanity political speculation had sunk as recently as 1844.

Even if the intelligentsia of France and England at the close of the eighteenth century and thereafter, may have been too indignant to recognise that the aristocratic debacle did not invalidate the institution of Aristocracy itself as a form of administration, how can they be forgiven for not having known that in every civilised community, government is never concerned with executive functions alone, but also and above all with establishing among the people a "Good Tone" in their way of life — that is to say those standards of honour, decency civility and good taste on which the harmony, order, smoothness, probity and ideals of beauty and desirability in their social intercourse depend.

Now, the only source from which a people can obtain this "blue print" of becoming behaviour, which is the code of rules prescribing all the things they should reject and all those they should accept, is their own *élite* who become the model all desire to emulate. For, as Aristotle so aptly observed, "What those who have the chief power regard as honourable will necessarily be the object which the citizens in general will aim at." (*Politics* II, Chap. XI, 1273a–1273b).

The fact that until the day before yesterday, no Liberal ever grasped that this essential function of government depended for its adequate performance on a gifted and competent *élite*, and that all the great styles, all the tasteful creations of the famous cultures of the past have been the outcome of this form of example and leadership, constitutes the gravamen of the charge that can be brought against the whole of the Liberal ideology.

At all events, it must be obvious that it is the complete absence from our present-day Western societies of any *élite* able to set a high standard of decency and good tone, that is chiefly responsible for the steady deterioration of our way of life and the decay of our civilisation.

Having, like the Liberals, forgotten or never known about the indispensability of a Tone-setting minority if a society is to remain sound and flourishing; and having never heard of Paul Adam's noble sentiment, that "*L'honneur n'est pas d'être envié mais d'être respecté*" ("*La Morale de L'Amour*, Chap. XVIII: "Honour consists, not in being envied but in being respected"), all that our so-called "Upper Classes" have taught the masses for generations, is the art of exciting envy

rather than respect; and, as we can see for ourselves, the success of their teaching has been spectacular.

Most shameful of all, however, is the way in which these disreputable leaders of our modern world, have left it to a notorious Liberal to restate in emphatic terms the need of a Tone-setting *élite* if our civilisation is to survive, driven by the spectacle of vulgarity and anarchy everywhere triumphant, an arch-Liberal and Democrat — Sir Frederick Clarke — probably unwittingly echoing a Conservative thinker like Sir Henry S. Maine, has recently reminded us that "The bulk of the major cultural achievements of mankind have come from the presence in society of a minority so placed that either through its free energies, or through its patronage of genius, it could concern itself with the higher refinements of living." (*Freedom in the Educational Society*, 1948, Chap. II).

Sir Frederick Clarke goes on to argue that this minority and its special functions constituted and always will constitute an indispensable part of every civilised community, and only at our peril can we try to dispense with it.

That we should long have been able to assume that we could get along without it and find all we need in the bright ideas of our Liberal Philosophers, may explain how a writer like T. S. Eliot, for instance, can speak of the last 150 years of our history as "An Age of progressive degradation."

Incidentally, the passage from Sir Henry Maine's works which I had in mind when I suggested above that Sir Frederick Clarke may have unwittingly echoed him, occurs in Essay Three of his *Popular Government*, where he says: "I have sometimes thought it one of the chief drawbacks in modern democracy that, while it gives birth to despotism with the greatest facility, it does not seem capable of producing aristocracy, though from that form of political and social ascendancy all improvement has hitherto sprung."

XV: Constitutional Monarchy

In July 1842, that interesting poet, Heinrich Heine, already aware of Europe's perilous plight — leaderless, with its millions all astray like lost sheep — shrank in alarm from the doom he feared must overtake it. "I advise all our grandchildren," he said "to come into the world with very thick hides; for the future reeks of Russian knouts, blood, devilry and copious thrashings." (*Franzoesische Zustände*, II, Chap. XLII: "*Die Zukunft riecht nach Juchten, nach Blut, nach Gottlosigkeit and nach sehr vielen Prügeln. Ich rathe unsern Enkeln, mit einer sehr dicken Rückenhaut zur Welt zu kommen.*")

Although not better informed than his contemporaries concerning the cause of Aristocracy's decline, as an impressionable artist he sensed the flood of popular errors and follies that threatened and, Noah's life-saving device not seeming appropriate, he thought the world could best be saved by being forewarned.

Seven years later, an even truer prophet sounded the alarm; for, in his *Salut du Peuple*, Constantin Pecqueur stated precisely whither the torrent of Liberal Thought (or lack of it) must lead. "Take heed," he cried, "lest civilisation plant her banners on the summit of the Kremlin! "

But meanwhile nothing has been done to prevent this consummation. On the contrary! With our male and especially our female politicians constantly mistaking a lump in their throats for a thought, we have reached the stage when a modern writer feels able to state categorically, "Modern thought does not look kindly on strong men." (John Masters in *Bugles and a Tiger*, Chap. V).

And why is this so? — Because strength can have no place in the committees, commissions and parliaments that constitute the machinery of modern administrations. Above all, no strong man would be tolerated by English and American women in this Age, and they form an ever increasing proportion of the members of all popular assemblies. Who can imagine a Joan of Arc under Napoleon, a Lady Violet Bonham Carter under Cromwell, or a Mrs Elizabeth Braddock under de Gaulle? One has but to hear how female members of the

"Establishment" speak of Franco and Dr. Salazar in *B.B.C.* political broadcasts to understand the pertinency of John Masters' remark in this Feminist Age.

One might even paraphrase Mr. Masters' dictum and say "Modern thought does not look kindly on any distinctions whatsoever." Hence probably that self-revelatory observation of the Duke of Windsor in *A King's Story* (1951, Chap. VIII). "The idea," he said, "that my birth and title should somehow or other set me apart from and above other people struck me as wrong."

Yet it was precisely his birth and title that should have set him apart from and above other people. And if he really felt that they failed to do so, then, whether he married Mrs Simpson or not, he was perfectly right to abdicate.

What should we think of congenitally superior leaders like Moses, Mahommed, Caesar, Frederick the Great or Wellington, if they had thought it wrong for their exceptional gifts to set them apart from and above other people? Should we feel that Frederick the Great and Wellington had shown charming modesty and humility if they had abjured their right to authority and command and thought it wrong that they should be set above others?

Nevertheless, I have not the slightest doubt but that the Duke of Windsor's protest struck 999,999 per million of English readers as wholly admirable in both sentiment and sense.

But, in mitigation of his Grace's confession, let us remember that he was born and bred in an Age when the whole weight of democratic and liberal prejudice was against any belief in the power of good lineage to confer any singular role or privilege on any one whomsoever. Only at Crufts, the Kennel Club and Racing Stables did the beliefs still survive that descent from distinguished and champion forebears set a yawning gulf between a thoroughbred and his mongrel contemporaries.

And this brings us to a consideration of those sins monarchs and aristocrats have committed *against themselves* and against the minimum requirements for the survival of their respective orders, which, by impairing their quality, has culminated in their eclipse as rulers and in the ultimate rise of Democracy.

Many common factors account for the decline of the two major ruling powers in Europe during the period preceding the triumph of Ochlocracy; and we shall first examine those which helped to discredit Kingship and to usher in that bogus form of it, invented in England, known as Constitutional or Limited Monarchy.

When English and French people speak proudly of their "Constitution" they vaguely imagine that it is a sort of legal and well-defined bulwark of rules protecting them from any tyranny that might be attempted by one of the components of their nation's governing body.

For, as Gwendolen M. Carter and H. Herz maintain, "Constitutions define and thereby limit public power." (*Government and Politics in the 20th Century*, Chap. VI).

Legally, Parliament in England means the reigning Sovereign, the Lords and the Commons, acting in combination to govern the country. Yet when modern English people speak of "Parliament", what they really mean is no more than the House of Commons.

And they happen to be quite right in thus understanding the word; for in practice this "Sovereign House" has swallowed up all the powers of the other two components of the governing triune. It has taken upon itself to discard the co-operation of the Sovereign and Second Chamber, and even to question their very *raison-d'être*.

This does not however prevent the public and politicians from continuing to speak of the "British Constitution" as if it still existed in its ancient form. This is because insensibly, and owing to the absence of any written document, legally protected, and defining the Constitution, the Popular Assembly, or third component of the ruling triune has, without the generally ignorant and politically indifferent populace having been aware of it, played ducks and drakes with the old governing body and appropriated all its powers. In short, what has happened is that, by dexterously and demagogically enlisting the support of the listless and gullible masses, the Lower House has eliminated from the country's administration, or effectively neutralised, those other two members of the ruling triune which were originally supposed to safeguard the nation from any usurpation of power by one branch alone of the Administration.

That it has been able in this high-handed way to gerrymander with the political powers of the governing body, was, however, due, not only to England's imperfectly secured Constitution, but also to the self-appointed right of the Lower House to make and unmake laws over the heads of the other two members of the Administration. For, as the authors of *Government and Politics in the 20th Century*, (Chap. II) pertinently observe: "Genuine constitutionalism is absent where constitutions are forever made and remade, changed and abolished so as to fit the political needs of the respective power-holders."

At all events, the last 250 years — i.e. the whole of the period since the Restoration of the Monarchy — have shown the steady progress of two essentially Liberal Movements, both of which were greatly accelerated in the nineteenth century; that aiming at reducing the power of the Throne on the one hand, and that determined to abolish the power of the Lords on the other. And odd as it may seem it was the most democratic of the three components of Parliament which, despite Democracy's desperate need of such checks and controls as the Throne and a Second Chamber, were intended to, and could supply, abolished the powers of both. Well might Lord Bryce exclaim that "the peoples who most need to be protected against themselves are the least disposed to provide such protection." (*Modern Democracies*, Vol. II, Chap. LXIII).

Naturally, the result has been that the House of Commons has placed itself in a position to be able to tyrannise to any extent over the country and has left it without any means of defence. As Mr. Michael Stewart, M.P., says, "Since it is true that a Government with a majority in Parliament can legally do as it pleases, the legal defence against tyranny seems weak." (*The British Approach to Politics*, Chap. II).

When we reflect on what has happened to the Crown in the 360 years since the death of Elizabeth I, and how the assembly of her humble advisers has gradually become the Sovereign's overlords, so that Disraeli felt able truly to describe the sceptre as no more than a pageant, it can hardly be denied that this part of our boasted "Constitution" is now little more than an ornament.

Indeed, in a Commons debate of December 1947, on the allowance to be granted to Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip, Mr. Attlee (now Lord Attlee) actually maintained that "Broadly speaking, we have accepted the conception of a ceremonial monarchy . . . I do not think the country wants anything in the way or a monarchy that is not ceremonial." (*Times*, 18.12.47).

This was tantamount to admitting that the country wanted nothing more than a monarchy that is a pageant. Nor did his remark provoke the faintest murmur of protest; and in a leader in the *Daily Mail* of the 18th December 1947, it was implied that, without the pageantry and ceremony the monarchy "would be nothing."

So completely has the Royal influence been curtailed that the Sovereign now acts and even speaks only at the bidding and under the dictation of the Party having the majority in the House of Commons; and Messrs. Taylor Cole, David R. Deener, and Alexander Brady certainly

did not intend to be humourous when they gave as an example of the Queen's present prerogative "the naming of her son Prince Charles as Prince of Wales in the summer of 1958." (*European Political Systems*, Chap. 4. i). Even the Royal assent to Bills passed by the Houses of Parliament is now no more than a polite fiction and "No Sovereign has refused to assent to a Bill since 1707". (*British Parliamentary Democracy*, by S. Bailey, Chap. 2).

This is not to imply that it would be advisable to give the present royal houses of Europe more real power than they now possess, or that it would be desirable to restore in modern England the royal power which was formerly wielded by English monarchs.

But it is to imply that, more particularly in a Democracy, the total demotion of the Crown as a valuable factor in the administration, has been a serious loss. Because, given the proper personality, and assuming that he has been appropriately trained for his unique function, and not brought up in one of the best schools of his country designed for the education of men whose functions *are not unique*, no member of the Parliamentary triune could do better service for the nation than the Crowned Head. He stands outside all Parties; he has no private axe to grind; is able to take an objective view of all national questions; is never driven as are his ministers and their supporters to cajole and bribe the electorate; and he cannot be blackmailed, as Political Parties habitually are by the voting mob, to force him to promote discriminative legislation.

Finally, he is admirably situated for the difficult task of taking a long-term view of all the measures to which he may be called upon to assent, whilst his exalted rank and conspicuous position makes him an ideal figurehead by means of which a good Tone may be set for the way of life of his people.

To give but one example of the loss suffered by the nation through the virtual elimination of the Royal power from the Constitution, consider the so-called "No-Hanging Bill" of 1965.

In spite of the fact that for 258 years no English sovereign had dared to refuse to assent to a Bill, it is my belief that if only Elizabeth the Second had on this occasion recognised her chance not only of exercising her prerogative to refuse her assent, but also of demonstrating to England and the whole of Europe the indispensability of the Power of the Crown in any sane Constitution, she would have had the vast majority in the country behind her, and would have revived and greatly enhanced the waning prestige of the Throne.

It would certainly have amounted to a perplexing blow to the Leader of the Political Party in Power; but it would also have constituted a noble gesture in defence of Freedom, and would have awakened even the sleepiest brains in the Electorate to the danger with which the present unilateral and monopolistic legislative power of the Commons threatens our liberties.

To those who know their history, moreover, it would have been a reminder of Charles I's heroic words when, standing on the scaffold he told the surrounding populace that he was dying a martyr to the Cause of "their Liberty and Freedom." (Rushworth: *Historical Collections*, Part IV, Vol. II, p. 1429).

XVI: Royalty's Sins Against Itself

To defend the active role of Royalty in a National Government now provokes little more than a compassionate smile. More especially is this so among the ignorant and those who, although alleged to be educated, have studied history divorced from psychology.

Yet where else than on the Throne could we hope to find an umpire able to display the virtues, judgment and other qualities described in the previous chapter? Need the errors perpetrated by Royal Houses in the past commit those who may now be called upon to perform kingly functions to stumble into the same pitfalls — repeat the same old blunder of primogeniture; contract the same unwise and dysgenic marriages; fail in the time-honoured way to provide a unique education for the heirs who are destined to become unique public servants; and finally omit to provide some disciplinary rules and sanctions like those devised by the ancient Egyptians to maintain the quality and the efficiency of their Pharaohs? For we have seen how the Mediaeval Church tried for a while to exercise this Super-Monarchical function, and how, after the loss of its power, there was no Authority left to control Royalty.

It may sound unrealistic to suggest at this moment in European history that a wisely controlled line of Kings might still be a possibility if the proper means were devised for the maintenance of their quality and their regal behaviour. But the many arguments in favour of such a step still remain unanswered and unrefuted, and with the pessimism common to all Liberals, such methods of control calculated to maintain the quality and efficiency of a public service, are left to such organisations as the Medical Profession, the Bar and the Law Society.

It may also sound romantic to speak to-day of the unique functions of a genuinely ruling monarch, and therefore to insist on the uniqueness of the kind of education and training that an heir to the Throne should be given. Yet this was precisely what no less a thinker than Kant emphatically advocated. He recognised that it was ridiculous to affect democratic, Liberal and "broad-minded" airs in a matter as important as the preparation of a functionary destined to occupy a unique station;

and he dismissed as nonsense the notion that any national school, however exclusive, could provide the requisite unique education for such a functionary. (See his *Über Padogogik*, Edit. by Prof. Willmann, especially pp. 62–69, on the Education of Men of Exalted Station).

The slip-shod thought that enabled a Keir Hardie to say, as he did in the House of Commons in May 1901, that he could not "see the uses of the Royal Family", might be condoned on the score of his use of the definite article before "Royal". But let us not exceed his benightedness by using the indefinite article in its stead.

It is however romantic to pose as a royalist if we fail to recognise that, owing to the fundamental iniquity of Man, Royalties are just as much in need of disciplinary control as are the members of any other calling; and that the ultimate cause of their discredit has always been the sins they have committed against themselves and their good repute. And of these sins, the only two peculiar to themselves alone and not shared by the Aristocracy, are, first of all that of failing to give their heirs a unique education and training, and secondly that of recklessly adulterating their blood.

It is true that all over Europe, Royalty suffered from a disadvantage from which the Aristocracy were to a great extent, and the common people wholly, free, and as this disadvantage may be regarded as the peculiar bane of Kingship in our Western civilisation, it is important to understand exactly what it was.

In the first place we have to remember that conditions in the Middle Ages and even much later, conspired to bring about an enormous amount of local endogamy or in-breeding in the general population. The difficulties of transport alone would have sufficed to encourage this practice; for, by exposing the majority of young people to the influence of propinquity, which is among the most frequent causes of choice in mating even in our much more fluid Age, the masses tended everywhere to be very much inbred and therefore more homogeneous than they are to-day. Indeed, it was this prevalent localised homogeneity which accounted for their proverbial beauty — a quality noticed by most foreign visitors to the British Isles before the Industrial Revolution — and also for the development and retention of dialects in various distinctly demarcated areas in the country.

Thus, Dr. Franz Boas, the inveterate opponent of Racial Discrimination and defender of miscegenation, assures us that "the long stability of European populations which set in with the beginning of the Middle Ages and continued, at least in rural districts, until very

recent times, has brought about a large amount of inbreeding in every limited district." (*Race, Language and Culture*, p. 313). But true as this is of European populations as a whole, it is particularly true of an insular people like the English. And as we have no reason to doubt that the homogeneity resulting from this state of affairs, protected the populace from all those conflicts and disharmonies, both mental and physical, which tend to afflict people in whom the clash of disparate types and family strains is, through a mixed heritage, a constant source of instability, ugliness and even ill-health, we are justified in assuming from their homogeneity alone that they were a saner and happier population than that of modern Europe, including of course, modern England.

The notorious beauty and health of the inbred English, recognised by such foreign witnesses of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as the Venetians Savorgnano and Nicolo de Favri, the German traveller, Keichel, and Erasmus and Cardinal Bentivoglio, soon disappeared when, owing to the increased travelling facilities, the population became more fluid and more miscegenated. But the prevalent plainness and even ugliness, accompanied by mediocre health and stamina, which we now see about us to-day, and which an American observer like Nathaniel Hawthorne was one of the first to record in the years 1853–57, has since been commented upon by many writers, among them, Thomas Hardy, George Meredith, and Bernard Shaw. (See on this whole subject Chap. VIII of my *Quest of Human Quality*). The fact that the English were originally g the blend of a few different races should not blind us to the fact that their initial heterogeneity had, owing to their insular position, ample time to become corrected so as to produce a more or less homogeneous stock in the generations preceding the Industrial Revolution.

But from the earliest times, the advantages the general population enjoyed as the result of these conditions, were wholly, or almost wholly, denied to their Royal rulers, who, unable to find mates of a suitable rank among the natives of their own country, fell compelled in every fresh generation to scan the European horizon for mates of blood sufficiently "blue" to sustain their offspring's Divine Right to regal powers and privileges.

There is no doubt about this strange fact, although historians fail to remark on its importance, both as a cause of the decline of Royal houses and as a feature of Royal marriages which differentiated them from the matings of the common people. For whilst among the populace

there were considerable chances of preserving family and stock qualities, Royalty were usually subjected to all the rigours of reckless cross-breeding. Thus, the very people for whom the preservation of the lineal virtues and abilities were a matter of the utmost importance, were repeatedly abandoned to the biological havoc of cross-breeding, and thereby to the constant adulteration, dilution and squandering of their patrimony of ruler and other attributes.

To a people as prescient and deeply conscious of the lofty endowments required for good rulership as were the ancient Egyptians, such methods of mating as were practised by the governing houses of Europe, would have seemed hardly sane. What then had happened since their day to bury in oblivion their measures for the conservation of character and *virtu* in human family lines?

For it was chiefly in princely houses that this squandermania of carefully garnered attributes was practised, owing to the persistent miscegenation which characterised their marriages. Thus European Royalty's determined search for so-called "blue-blood" culminated in consequences the reverse of those envisaged by the original improvisers of the term. For the "*Sangre azul*" known to the Spaniards, related only to the blood of those proud families of Castile who could justly claim that they had allowed no contamination of their stock through Moorish, Jewish or other foreign admixture.

Can we therefore wonder that whilst in most cases sanity, health, beauty and homogeneity were attained and preserved by the common people, debility, ugliness and dementia soon appeared in most of Europe's Royal Houses and became noticeable to historians as early as the fourteenth century?

At all events, by the middle of the fifteenth century, insanity, or at least imbecility, had already assailed the English House of Lancaster (Henry VI, 1421–1471) — and subsequently the Hanoverians (George III, 1738–1820). According to the Greville *Memoirs* (17.5.1832) William IV was as demented as his father, and Prof. A. N. Whitehead relates even of Victoria (1819–1901) that "her sanity was doubted". (*Essays on Science and Philosophy*, 1948, Part I. Chap. II).

Similarly afflicted were the French Valois (Charles VI, 1368–1422 and Henri III, 1551–1612); the Holy Roman Emperors (Rudolph II, 1728–1762), and the Romanoffs of Russia (Peter III, 1728–1762). These are among the extreme examples; but in other European Royal families, border-line cases were plentiful. Ludwig II of Bavaria was one of them. His brother, Otto, was however quite mad, and this family's

blood in the veins of the later Hapsburgs may account for some of the strange behaviour recorded of them.

Dr. J. A. Williamson maintains that in England the decline of royal ability began with Edward II (1284–1327) who was an abnormal character (*The Evolution of England*, Chap. IV, iv). Edward III's mind is certainly known to have been deranged in later life, whilst his grandson, Henry IV, was an epileptic who, worn out by fits, died at the early age of 46. His grandson, Henry VI is known to have become hopelessly insane. But it would have been surprising had he escaped this fate; for, in addition to his much confused ancestry (in itself a cause of aberrations which, as we have seen, afflicted his forebears) there was actually grave mental disease in his maternal grandfather and maternal great grandmother. Although the son of a man who, had he long survived his 35th year might have proved one of England's greatest monarchs, his mother Catherine of France was the daughter of the mad king Charles VI, and the granddaughter of Jeanne de Bourbon who herself suffered from repeated attacks of insanity and had, according to Funck Brentano, transmitted the infirmity to her son. (*The Middle Ages*, Chap. XIX).

The fact that, although the French King's and his mother's insanity was well known, Henry V never wavered in his determination to win Catherine of Valois' hand so as to strengthen his claim to the French throne, is one further indication, if such were needed, of the frivolous disregard of biological considerations which has characterised European society ever since Hellenistic times. Nor should it be forgotten by those aware of the inexorable severity of the Laws of heredity, that the positive taint of insanity which entered the Lancastrian dynasty through Henry's marriage, re-entered the royal line with Henry VII who, through Catherine's second marriage, was this King's grandfather.

In view of his ancestors' record, the relative excellence of Henry V may occasion some wonder. But it is probable that here we simply have the example of an exceptional and a lucky escape from the risks entailed by atrocious breeding methods. It just happened that Henry V managed to collect in his constitution the best, rather than the least desirable hereditary factors in his stock.

But, in the long line of English sovereigns, the examples of failure, misrule, disease and mental aberration, which may justly be ascribed in some measure to the reckless miscegenation to which European rulers, in their search for "blue blood" have been addicted, are so

numerous that many chapters would be needed to cover the whole of the ground. I have therefore decided to round off this part of my argument by attempting to explain, in accordance with the principles already outlined, how, as a descendant of his great ancestor Henry IV, Louis XVI of France, executed in 1793, came to be such a will-less, feckless, incapable ruler. As a concrete example of much that has been maintained in these chapters, and as a further illustration of my suggestion that the charges brought by Liberals against hereditary rulership, whether regal or aristocratic, have little to do with either monarchy or aristocracy as political institutions, but derive from the failure of both kings and nobles to understand the means by which their quality and superior endowments might be preserved, if not enhanced, the history of the Bourbon dynasty is particularly instructive. For its total decline in 240 years from greatness to complete nonentity, is one of the most dramatic lessons we have had on how the flouting of the laws which alone can maintain the quality and ascendancy of a family, animal or human, has led to the widespread delusion that the hereditary transmission of ability and other lofty traits of character is but a snobbish myth.

XVII: The Bourbon Dynasty

We need to concern ourselves with only sixteen of Louis XVI's forebears in order to know the sort of hereditary influences which, by making him what he was, determined his own, France's and to a large extent even Europe's fate. They were:

Antoine de Bourbon (1518–1562) married to Jeanne d'Albret (1527–1528); Henry IV (1555–1610) married to Marie de Médicis (1573–1649); Louis XIII (1601–1643) married to Anne d'Autriche (1601–1690); Louis XIV (1638–1715) married to Marie Thérèse (1638–1683); Louis, the Grand Dauphin (1661–1711) married to Marie-Anne de Bavière (1660–1690); Louis, Duc de Bourgogne (1682–1712) married to Marie Adélaide de Savoie (1685–1712); Louis XV (1710–1774) married to Marie Leszczynska (1703–1768): and the Dauphin, father of Louis XVI (1724–1765) married to Marie-Josephe de Saxe (1731–1767).

In the light of the present thesis, it is important to note that the only one among these royal spouses who did not introduce some foreign blood into the Royal line, was Jeanne d'Albret; and she and her son, Henry IV, happen to be without a doubt the most gifted and in every respect the best of the sixteen people with whom we are concerned. And Henry IV's outstanding merits and achievements are to be ascribed chiefly, if not wholly, to the qualities he inherited from his mother and to her influence on his upbringing.

Both contemporary memorialists and all historians are unanimous in considering Henry IV as France's greatest monarch and the highest example of her national type. Fontenay de Mareuil and Du Plessis Mornay regarded him as the greatest French Monarch since Charlemagne; and the modern French historian, Louis Battifol and most modern English historians, from Dr. Mandell Creighton to Stanley Leathes, concur.

Unfortunately, however, owing first of all to the less admirable characteristics which, though only latent in his blood, he inherited from his father, Antoine de Bourbon; and secondly to his unwise marriage with Marie de Médicis, his descendants inevitably inherited many weaknesses and defects of character which he himself did not display.

Among a few minor and unenviable traits which, however, heredity did transmit to his descendants to the very end of the family line, were his unpleasant body odour and his gluttony. It is true that his grandson Louis XIV's gluttony was due less to hereditary influences than to his infestation with tape-worm — an affliction from which, owing to their imperfect knowledge of helminthics, his doctors were never able to rid him. But the Bourbon trait of sitomania certainly descended to Louis XVI, 170 years after the birth of the celebrated founder of the dynasty; whilst, strange to say, both this famous ruler and his grandson, Louis XIV lived to be reviled in almost the same offensive terms for their unpleasant body odour by their respective mistresses.

Marie de Médicis introduced into the dynasty the blood of her Florentine family at a stage in their history when they had become a mongrel stock and were in full decline. She was destitute of all merit and is described by St. Simon as "imperious, jealous, and stupid to a degree". Boulenger speaks of her as "a grossly stupid lady" and Louis Battifol thought her principal trait was the imbecility she inherited from her mother Jeanne d'Autriche.

Henry IV who "had the lowest opinion of her ability" regarded his marriage to her as exclusively politic and behaved accordingly. At the time of their union she was already 26 years old and "both fat and unattractive", and Battifol adds that she had *"un tempérament froid"*—"was temperamentally cold", (*La Vie Intime d'une Reine de France*, Chap. III).

The only laudable action ever recorded of her was her rejection of Matthias, brother of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph II, as a suitor, because he was deformed and violent (*"homme difforme et violent"*), which at least shows her good taste. Battifol alludes to her mongrel stigmata, for he tells us "her face betrayed her dual origin: her mother an Austrian, the father a Medici. From her mother she inherited the lower part of her face and the prognathism of the Hapsburgs with everted lips, lacking in distinction; from her father she inherited her large brow and steady gaze." (L. Battifol: *La Vie Intime d'une Reine de France*, Chap. I: *"Sa figure trahisait sa double origine etc."*).

Why then did Henry IV marry her?

— He was heavily indebted to the Medicis and was in urgent need of further financial help. His debt to his wife's family alone amounted to no less than 250,000 golden crowns (*écus*). In addition he had considerable political advantages to gain from union with the Florentine family; for besides France's need of acquiring some

influence in Italy, then under Spanish and Austrian domination, an alliance with Tuscany promised to bring Savoy over to the French side.

So, overlooking the sinister brood which a former Medici queen had given to Henry II, who was by no means contemptible either as a monarch or a man; as Europe's luck would have it he made Marie his bride and thus scaled the fate of both France and England as we know them to-day, if not of all Europe and the rest of the world.

By adulterating the blood of France's greatest monarch, the match proved disastrous to Marie's adopted country and, through her relationship to the Stuarts, also to Great Britain; and by contributing an important share to the many undesirable traits which thenceforth, through further mongrelisation, began to pile up in the Bourbon Line, she helped to bring about the fall of the French monarchy.

Poor Louis XIII, the child of this wholly incompatible couple, is described as "unattractive", as "certainly not intelligent", and afflicted with "an habitual stammer" which in itself indicated some nervous instability. (J. Boulenger: *Le Grand Siècle*, Chap. II). Voltaire speaks of him as "a prince whose spirit was enervated by a feeble and sickly physique." (*Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, Chap. VII: *"Ce prince dont un corps faible et malade énervait l'âme")* Tallement des Réaux refers to his cruelty and heartlessness; lays stress on his prudery and unprecedented frigidity, and tells us that he rarely cohabited with his wife although he formed no illicit unions.

Indeed, Anne of Austria is said to have felt so severely neglected that Spain, deeply offended, made her ambassador lodge a complaint. (J. Boulenger: *Le Grand Siècle*, Chap. II). Tallement assures us that it was not until 4 years after her marriage to Louis that Luynes was able to induce the King to consummate the marriage. (*Historiettes*, Vol. II). At all events, Anne's first child, who became Louis XIV, was born in the twenty-third year of her marriage to the King; and there can be little doubt that her husband's frigid nature, especially noticeable in a seventeenth century man, was inherited from his mother. It is not therefore improbable that Louis XVI's marked neglect of Marie Antoinette may also have been due to a trait handed down from his Florentine ancestress.

According to Boulenger, Louis XIII was anything but prepossessing, "his mouth always open beneath his huge Bourbon nose and his pendulous underlip imparted as little intelligence to his long face as his stammer lent liveliness to his conversation." (J. Boulenger: *Le Grand Siècle*, Chap. IV). Only his lack of passion preserved him from

suffering the wounding affronts which their respective mistresses hurled at his father and his son; for he happened to be afflicted with the same offensive body odour as they were. Tallement tells us in fact that he often boasted about it. "*Je tiens de mon père moi*", he was wont to say, "*Je sens le gousset.*" (*Historiettes*, I: "I take after my father I do. I have the same axillary smell.")

Anne of Austria was "good-looking, healthy, fresh and buxom"; but when she died of cancer at the age of 65, she left behind her two sons, Louis and Philippe, who were as disparate as the siblings born of such ill-assorted parents might well be expected to be. The elder became Louis XIV, and his junior, known as the Duc d'Orléans, grew up to resemble in character our own Edward II and some of the later Valois kings — that is to say, he was as unpleasant as can be imagined. Even Voltaire, who disliked to dwell on the seamy side of Le Grand Siècle, speaks of him with contempt and implies that he had homosexual tendencies. And this is interesting because there is some evidence which indicates that in areas where much mixture of stocks and types has occurred, there is a tendency for people of "intermediate sex to multiply unduly". (See Halban und Seitz: *Biologie und Pathologie des Weibes*, 1st Edition, Vol. III, Section by Prof. Dr. P. Mathes). At all events the Duke of Orleans, although evidently bisexual (for he married twice and had several children), certainly made both of his wives very miserable, though neither had the power or inclination to avenge herself as Isabella of France did against our Edward II.

XVIII: Louis XIV

An impressive number of French historians now reject the legendary version of the Sun-King's reign. But, to the general reader, especially in England, it still means an Age of glory and good government.

Even Lord Acton does not hesitate to declare this third Bourbon sovereign as "by far the ablest man who was born in modern times on the steps of a throne." (*The Cambridge Modern History*, 1907–31 edtn., Vol. V. Chap. I).

Yet no one who has made even a cursory study of the state of France and particularly of the conditions among the common people during his reign, or has merely read de Tocqueville's *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (particularly Livre II, Chap. X. vi) can fail to agree with Thomas Henry Buckle who in Chap. IV and V of *The History of Civilisation in England*, declares that Louis XIV's reign "was an age of decay . . . an age of misery, of intolerable oppression . . . an age of bondage, of ignominy, of incompetence."

The most convincing proof of Buckle's accuracy is the public's sense of relief, its joy and jubilation, when at last the *Grand Monarque* was laid to rest. Even Voltaire, the greatest encomiast of the reign, concedes that Louis XIV "was not regretted as he deserved to be" (*Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, Chap. I XXVIII) whilst St. Simon says that "*Le peuple ruiné, accablé désespére, rendit grâce à Dieu, avec un éclat scandaleux, d'une déliverance donc les plus ardents désirs ne doutaient plus.*" (*Mémoires*: "The people, ruined, oppressed, and desperate, thanked God with unbecoming enthusiasm for a deliverance which their most passionate longing could now cease to doubt.").

How had this rapid decline in the ability of the dynasty come about? We can only infer that, in addition to the ravages wrought by the miscegenation following Antoine de Bourbon and Jeanne d'Albret, the strains introduced by that inferior person, Marie de Médicis, and by indolent, sensual Anne d'Autriche who "had little perception of the things of the mind" (K. Katz: *Louis XIV*, Chap. IV), outweighed the good qualities of the original stock.

Trustworthy Boulenger describes Louis XIV as neither highly intelligent nor at all brilliant (*Le Grand Siècle*. Chap. VII); whilst St. Simon, admittedly less reliable, speaks of him as "*né avec un esprit au-dessous du médiocre*" (*Mémoires*: "born with a mind less than mediocre.") Nor were his defects mitigated by a good education. His shrewd and intelligent sister-in-law (Liselotte) who was fond of him, acknowledges that neither he nor her husband (the Duc d'Orléans) "had been taught anything; they scarcely knew how to read and write." (E. F. Henderson: *A Lady of the Old Régime*, Chap. II). St. Simon concurs; for he says of the King, "*A peine lui apprit on à lire et à écrire, et il demeura tellement ignorant que les choses les plus connues d'histoire etc. et des lois, il n'en sut jamais un mot. Il tombait, par ce défaut, et quelquefois en public, dans les absurdités les plus grossières.*" (*Mémoires*: "He had hardly been taught to read or write, and he remained so ignorant that the most notable facts of history etc. and law were unknown to him. On account of these defects he was sometimes guilty of the most absurd howlers, even in public.")

A. de Montgon (*Louis XIV*, Chap. III), denies this and maintains that Louis XIV had had a much better education than the majority of his contemporaries; but against this we have the scrupulous historian, Boulenger, who says "His education was of the scantiest." (*Le Grand Siècle*, Chap. VII).

Like his mother, he adored flattery "even of the grossest kind" says St. Simon; and although we know that he wept easily, he was singularly heartless, as is shown, not merely by his treatment of his country's peasantry, but also by his repeated acts of brutality to La Vallière and his callous indifference to the Duchess of Burgundy's plight in 1708. I have already mentioned his sitomania, as also his unpleasant body odour. But, concerning the latter, we are told that is was so overpowering that, when he took one of his rare baths, an attendant had the duty of burning some kind of aromatic on a red hot shovel to sweeten the air.

St. Simon maintains that even "the youngest and most second rate of the King's lieutenants in the government ruled him more than he ruled them; whilst towards women he was singularly helpless. Mme de Montespan is said to have treated him very much as the Duchess of Cleveland treated Charles II; and when his heart was engaged he could without protest suffer even having "a whole dish of salad flung in his face" as it once was by the young Duchesse de Bourgogne. (K. Katz: *Louis XIV*, Chap. XIII). In fact, the regimen of women really began in

his reign, and not as some historians aver, with Mme de Prie under the Regency.

His wife, Marie Thérèse, the daughter of Philip IV of Spain and Elizabeth of France (sister of Louis XIII), besides adding more foreign blood, also contributed a further dose of the Medici strain to the dynasty, and the decline, already pronounced, was thus accelerated. It is true that she also restored some of Henry IV's blood to the line, because she was Louis XIV's cousin; but her character gave little evidence of her relationship to the great founder of the dynasty. For Boulenger describes her as "a pattern of the greatest stupidity" (*Le Grand Siècle*, Chap. VII); Julia Cartwright calls her "dull, ignorant and bigoted" (*Madame*, 1903, Chap. VII); whilst W. H. Lewis, in *The Sunset of the Splendid Century*, (Chap. 4), says, "she had been a stupid girl and grew up into a stupid woman" — in short, she was a chip of the old Medici block. Grant describes her as "neither intellectual nor attractive". (*The Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. V. Chap I).

All we know about heredity and the effects of cross- and inbreeding would be invalidated if the offspring of Louis XIV and Marie Thérèse had been desirable specimens of humanity and possessed of a trace of their great ancestor's quality.

But no such deviation from the established laws of heredity actually occurred; for the Grand Dauphin, one of the most abject nonentities ever born in a royal household, abundantly fulfilled all that might have been expected from the mating of his forebears. And, strange as it may seem, there was in his entourage at least one person who, despite the ignorance of biology prevalent at the time, divined the truth about this vital matter.

I refer to clever Mme de Maintenon who, addressing the young Duc de Maine, Louis XIV's bastard son by Mme de Montespan, once said: "It is well that you should realise that you are happily saved from the mixed blood that is ordinarily the fate of persons of your class." (W. H. Lewis: *The Sunset of the Splendid Century*, Chap. 4). Evidently hinting at the fact that, unlike the King's legitimate children, the Duc de Maine was at least the son of a French mother, her remark shows how already in those days an intelligent woman was able to observe and recognise the dire consequences of the reckless cross-breeding that was the bane of Europe's Royal Houses.

The Grand Dauphin (1661–1711) was certainly no example of the success of the practice. Henri Carré, who declares him feeble-minded, says, "Of less than average intelligence and of more than average

indolence, his lack of energy and his lack of wit made his influence at court negligible". (*La Duchesse de Bourgogne*, Chaps. III and XVI). To judge from his behaviour even in his father's presence, it seemed doubtful whether he could be quite sane. Bloated and coarse in his tastes, he was "incapable of acquiring knowledge, phenomenally ignorant, and incapable of talking about anything except hunting and cooking." (C. C. Dyson: *Mme de Maintenon — Her Life and Times*, Chaps. V and XIII). St. Simon speaks of him as "encased in fat and benightedness" and confesses that when the Prince was supposed to be dying of smallpox, he and Mme de Simon prayed that he might not recover. When there were for a while faint hopes of his cure, they were panic stricken, and when at last he succumbed they leapt for joy. "*Ma dèlivrance particulière*" he says, "*me semblait si grande et si inespérée qu'il me semblait . . . que l'Etat gagnait tout en une telle perte . . . il eut été un roi pernicieux.*" (*Mémoires*: "My own relief seemed so great and unhoped for, because I believed his death to be in every respect a gain for the State. He would have made a pernicious sovereign.").

Louis XIV himself was perhaps of all French people the most gratified by his son's death.

The Grand Dauphin's wife, Marie Anne, Victoria, Christine de Bavière, is said to have been an ugly, "insignificant and not very healthy German woman." (J. Boulenger: *Le Grand Siècle*, Chap. VII). She was suspected of being a hypochondriac, and from 1685, when only 25 years old, until her death, she "was always complaining about her health." After a year of "extreme suffering" she died in 1690 at the early age of thirty.

What could be expected of such a couple? Besides importing fresh alien blood into the dynasty, Marie Anne failed even to contribute any health or beauty to it, and it is surprising that her children, poor specimens though they were, ultimately proved as presentable as they did.

The eldest, the Duc de Bourgogne, who became Dauphin on his father's death, is described as "of small stature and sickly appearance, with an ill looking mouth, and a humpback" (C. C. Dyson: *Mme de Maintenon — Her Life and Times*, Chap. XVI). The Duchess of Orleans (Liselotte) tells us" he had a shocking mouth, an unhealthy skin and was deformed" (H. Carré: *La Duchesse de Bourgogne*, Chap. XII). Carré also suggests that these shortcomings not unnaturally made him repugnant to his wife. St. Simon hints at homosexual tendencies and says "*it devint bossu*" ("he became a hunchback") in spite of wearing

steel supports, and adds that he finally went lame. Nevertheless, doubtless because of the memorialist's loathing of the Montespan brood of bastards, he deplored the Prince's early death, and observes, "The world was unworthy of him and he was all too ready to enter eternal happiness." (*Mémoires*).

But the Duke of Burgundy was by no means the paragon St. Simon would have us believe. He was certainly sexually abnormal and probably alienated his wife on that account. Intellectually weak, he also failed to shine as a soldier; for Carré declares his behaviour at the siege of Lille was disgraceful. (*La Duchesse de Bourgogne*, Chap. XVII). The same author tells us that his young and attractive wife often raised a laugh in court by imitating his limping gait.

Although the old monarch's favourite at court, Marie Adélaide de Savoie, could not have been a very estimable person. The granddaughter of the despicable Philippe d'Orléans and of Henrietta (Charles I's daughter), her health was never good; she was always delicate and her nerves were unsteady. (F. Hamel: *The Dauphines of France*, Chap. VIII). Liselotte, her step-grandmother, thought her "delicate and even sickly" and St. Simon describes her as "ugly with few teeth, and those decayed, a long neck betraying signs of goitre, and pendant cheeks." (*Mémoires*).

According to F. Hamel, she was not intelligent and to the end of her days wrote and spelt with great difficulty. Carré declares her "heartless, careless and frivolous", and the judgment, probably true, is important because it seems likely that her repulsive son inherited these failings from her. Carré also tells us she had "little culture and in conversation was not brilliant." (*La Duchesse de Bourgogne*, Chap. XII).

She imported a Savoyan and English strain into the dynasty without enriching it with either stamina, health, beauty or intelligence; and she died in 1712 at the age of 27.

Such were the parents of the monster, Louis XV, who consummated the havoc wrought in the State by his great grandfather; and of whom it may fairly be said that, together with Louis XIV, he was probably responsible for most of the disasters that have overtaken Europe from the time of his accession to the present day.

XIX: Louis XV

Of Louis XV, in whom the most depraved of the Bourbon characteristics seem to have collected, Pierre de Nolhac says: "One may well recoil in terror from the power of his evil propensities . . . left as he was at the mercy of his all-pervading lasciviousness, what would have become of him if in his heart there had not been that faint trace, forgotten perhaps though not wholly obliterated, of the Christian rule of duty . . . without it, in after years, this vicious man would have become a monster." (*Louis XV and Marie Leczinska*, Chap. III).

Edward Armstrong describes his life as "absolutely idle", devoted to his dogs, horses and mistresses, and implies that he was heartless. (*The Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. VI, Chap. V). Casimir Stryienski, the French authority on the period, defends Louis XV by emphasising the errors of his upbringing (*The Eighteenth Century*, Chap. II); but admits that "all his life he was idle, a great hunter and an equally great gambler" (Part II, Chap. VI).

Prof. A. C. Grant says, "it would be difficult to mention the name of any European king whose private life shows such a record of vulgar vice unredeemed by higher aims of any kind." (*Encyl. Brit.* 1910, Vol. XVII).

Even Pierre Gaxotte, who tries to whitewash the king, has to admit much that is damaging to his case. In his Preface to *Louis XV and His Times*, he maintains that Louis "has been judged wholly and solely on the testimony of his enemies". Yet he himself reveals the king as weak, prone to subject himself to android women and never energetic enough to apply himself to his duties as a ruler. He also acknowledges that Louis was "the most scandalous of princes" and relates how on one occasion "by way of being funny" he deliberately "trod on the foot of a man who had recently had an attack of gout", with the result that the fellow suffered such agony that, although coaxed to do so, he refused ever to show his face at Versailles again. (Chap. VI). Gaxotte moreover rather spoils his apologia by admitting that Nolhac, whose severe indictment of Louis I have quoted, conspicuously combines both accuracy and insight in his book on the king. (Chap. VI).

D'Argenson, Louis' able Minister of War, whom Mme de Pompadour caused to be sacked, said of the whole reign, "under the appearance of personal monarchy, it was really anarchy that reigned" and, as Louis sank ever more deeply into debauchery and vice, this summing-up became increasingly apt.

At last, infected by one of the young girls with whom, as a man of sixty-four, he happened in 1774 to be cohabiting, the King died of smallpox and left his miserably endowed eldest grandson the impossible task of restoring the royal prestige and establishing law and order in the neglected realm.

"I have governed and administered badly", Louis XV wrote in his will, "because I have little talent." (C. Stryienski: *The Eighteenth Century*, Part III, Chap. V). He might with equal truth have added, "and because all my life I have been a hopeless rake."

As for Louis XV's Queen, she was the last person who could have inspired a lasting affection in her husband. Besides her incompatibility as an alien, which meant that she introduced a further foreign strain into the dynasty, Marie Leszczynska was six and a half years older than her husband and was neither good-looking nor amusing. A German writer describes her as positively ugly and Gaxotte represents her as spinsterly, humdrum and provincial. (Chap. VI). A paragon of virtue, she was also dismally dull and, Louis being what he was, this was probably her worst defect. Her ten confinements had not increased tier attractiveness: besides which the whole of her behaviour and interests were petty and more middle-class than aristocratic.

Nolhac, however, regards her as much superior to Marie Antoinette in the attention she gave to culture and the arts. (Chap. IV). From King Stanislas, her father, she had inherited her plain looks and mediocre gifts. Nolhac describes him as "full of incurable ambition, but only indifferently endowed to realising it. . . . He was born to lead the life of a country squire with dignity and to play the tender role of a family man, rather than to exercise the authority and bear the responsibility of a ruler of a great nation." (Chap. I). And Marie Leszczynska seems to have handed on to her poor grandson Louis XVI many of these characteristics.

She was not enamoured of her role of Queen. "It's no fun being Queen", she once remarked, and Dr. Gooch tells us that when she died at the age of sixty-five "she was glad to go." (*Louis XV: The Monarchy in Decline*, Chap. 6, ii). She was at least spared the humiliation of seeing Mme du Barry installed as *Maitresse en titre*.

Dauphin Louis was very much like his mother in appearance. Like her too, he was reserved. "His conversation was coherent, well-informed and agreeable . . . he was a considerable judge of character" . . . and "would doubtless have shown more energy on the throne than did his son, Louis XVI" (C. Stryienski: *The Eighteenth Century*, Chap. VIII). But, too fat to enjoy the chase, "he was taciturn, preoccupied and heavy" and in view of the lack of sound judgment displayed by his son, it is important to note that he was most tactless and heartless as well. As an example of these two failings, he compelled his second wife, Marie Josephe de Saxe, to wear for years "bracelets that contained portraits of his first wife." (F. Hamel: *The Dauphines of France*, Chap. X). Dr. G. P. Gooch who devoted twelve pages of his book on Louis XV to the Dauphin, speaks of him as "one of the riddles of French history", and we gather from this historian's description of him that, like his grandfather, the Duke of Burgundy, he would probably have turned out to be a pious bigot and dreamer rather than a man of action (Chap. 6). He died of pulmonary tuberculosis in 1765.

His second wife, Marie Josephe de Saxe (1731–1767), the mother of the three last Bourbon Kings of France, was fifteen when he married her in 1746. She was the third daughter of Augustus III, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, and is described as "not pretty". Her nose and teeth were bad; yet some thought her attractive. Chevery says she was "cross to her household and little liked" (Gooch: *op. cit.*, 6 iii), and this seems to be confirmed by Walpole who in 1765 said of her, "she looks cross, is not civil and has the true Westphalian grace and accents." (F. Hamel, *op. cit.*, Chap X). It is therefore probable that the couple were more respected than liked. Stryienski, however, (*op. cit.*, Part II, Chap. VIII), describes her as "high-minded and well-educated" and says "she won universal esteem". Having, like many of her predecessors on the French throne, introduced a further strain of alien blood into the dynasty (this time Dano-German), she died of the same disease as her husband in 1707.

In view of his antecedents and breeding, it would have been little short of a miracle if Louis XVI had been a great king.

The state of affairs at the time when he ascended the throne called for a man of the stamp of the Founder of the Dynasty. No one less gifted could have been expected to cope with the difficulties of the situation. Instead, however, France was given a youth only twenty years old, well-meaning, honest and kind, but weak, ill-trained and generally unequal to the task awaiting him. He was moreover possessed

of tastes and inclinations that made him shun the onerous duties of his exalted rank. Dangerously subservient to his young attractive wife and more anxious to please everybody than to frame such policies as the disordered state of the nation demanded, he started by making concession after concession to every party or interest determined enough to intimidate him. As an example of his fecklessness, he had not been king for three months before his wife made him dismiss a man like Maupeou in whom he himself firmly believed.

Stryienski describes him as "heavy, ungainly, morally and physically awkward." Caraccioli, the Neapolitan Ambassador, says he was "boorish and rustic to such a degree that he might have been educated in a wood." (C. Stryienski, *op. cit.*, Part II, Chap. V). Mme de Campan, who was able to observe him at close quarters, throws much light on his character. "He had certain rather noble features (*des traits assez nobles*)", she says, "stamped however with melancholy. His bearing was clumsy and devoid of grandeur, and in his dress he was always extremely untidy. Despite all the skill of his hairdresser, he would soon appear dishevelled; for he took no care of his person. His voice, though not harsh, was far from pleasing and when he was excited it rose to a shrill falsetto." (*Mémoires sur la vie de Marie Antoinette*).

Furthermore — and this was his most fatal shortcoming as a husband — like his ancestor Louis XIII, he was sexually subnormal. Mme de Campan repeatedly mentions his neglect of Marie Antoinette. "Often," she says, "simply out of a sense of duly, he would go into bed beside her, but only to fall asleep at once without breathing a word" (*"et s'endormait souvent sans lui avoir adressé la parole"*). She assures us that even four years after their marriage he had still not had any marital intercourse. (*"Louis XVI à l'époque de la mort de son aieul n'eut pas encore joui des droits d'époux."* Mme de Campan, *op. cit.*, Chaps. III and IV).

This was all the more unfortunate because it undermined his wife's respect for him and left her to the influence of associates who were incapable of understanding the problems with which she and the King were confronted. Mme de Campan refers in this respect to the sinister figure of l'Abbé de Vermond and says that he was Marie Antoinette's evil genius (*"l'étoile funeste de Marie Antoinette."* Mme de Campan, *op. cit.*, Chap. II).

The Queen had had an indifferent education and like her sisters was not cultured. Nor was she improved by having at the age of fourteen joined the dissolute court of Louis XV. She needed a spouse who could

have corrected the faults in her upbringing and, by winning her entire trust and devotion, have afforded her wise leadership. Instead she had a man who was wax in her hands. "The King", wrote Mirabeau, "has only one man about him — his wife." (Louis Madelin: *The French Revolution*, Intro. Chap. IV). To make matters worse, besides being inexperienced, thoughtless and over-fond of gambling and dress, she was easily influenced and soon became the tool of a secret party at court "whose only principle was to secure places, sinecures and reversions to the detriment of those who might have been of use to the State." (C. Stryienski, *op cit.*, Chap. XVII).

Although she may have been much to blame for her unpopularity and the slanders that were current about her, her husband's character and lack of manliness were chiefly responsible for the fate that finally overtook her. It was his defects that made her dare to measure her will against his and turn elsewhere than to him for guidance and companionship. A wife who could put the clock forward a half to three-quarters of an hour so as to speed her sleepy husband to bed and the sooner to bring out the faro table, could hardly be deemed well mated; and the tragedy of her life may thus perhaps be summed up as the outcome of a *mesalliance*.

For Louis XVI had only two passions, which he indulged with unflagging fidelity; and they left him exhausted at the end of the day. Hours of valuable time would be spent "in trifling mechanical pursuits" and often he returned from the hunting field so thoroughly worn out that he would fall asleep in Council "when grave business was under discussion". (*The Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. VIII, Chap. IV). Mme de Campan speaks of masonry and locksmithery (*serrurie*) as amongst his favourite pastimes; and "after such work", she says, "his hands were often so filthy that I have heard the Queen remonstrate with him and rebuke him quite angrily." (*op. cit.*, Chap. V).

He was certainly a much better man and king than his grandfather; but he had humble and domestic virtues, inherited probably from his great-grandfather the dethroned King of Poland; and these were not the qualities required to win the fight he was called upon to wage in the late eighteenth century.

It is typical of him, for instance, that on May 4th 1789, when the States-General met in the Cathedral of St Louis and the hour had struck for the exercise of the utmost caution in the control of the factions there assembled, he not only kept the assembly waiting three whole hours before he appeared, but when at last he did come in and La Fare,

Bishop of Nancy, preached a sermon in which "he read the Court a lecture", Louis' fell fast asleep. He was woken up by the loud burst of applause with which the more revolutionary among the audience greeted the conclusion of the bishop's veiled admonition; and then, taking for granted that the harangue had been a fulsome eulogy of the reign, he beamed gratefully on the prelate. Again, when five months later "the surging populace set out for Versailles crying 'Bread! Bread!'" and, after insulting the Assembly, turned towards the Palace, "the king", Dr. G. W. Kitchin tells us, "was out hunting." (*History of France*, Vol. III, Chap. VIII).

Until it was too late to adopt any other policy than flight — and even this he succeeded in bungling most hopelessly — he appears to have had no statesmanlike understanding of the influences both intellectual and physical that were preparing the way for the Revolution.

In his person, we see vividly displayed all the irresolution, lack of self-confidence, infirmity of purpose and conflicting impulses which naturally afflict a man whose instincts are a tumult of the contending voices belonging to scores of disparate forebears; who knows no clear-cut goal because too many different influences strive for supremacy in his breast. Add to this the extreme mediocrity, compounded with villainy, of many of his ancestors and the fact that even his brothers were among those who conspired against him, and you behold a tragic figure who was certainly more sinned against than sinning, and who, as Professor Montagu declares, was "no more than an inglorious victim of the circumstances in which Fate had placed him." (*The Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. VIII, Chap. IV).

When, therefore on that January morning in 1795 he ascended the scaffold, he paid with his life for the ignorance, stupidity and lack of ordinary farmhouse wisdom in the ruling houses of Europe. Yet, to judge from the subsequent behaviour of Royalty on this Continent, his death served little purpose; for it taught no lesson to his many royal survivors and left their disillusioned subjects no alternative but to resort to that bogus and purely Fancy-dress form of Royalty known as "Constitutional" or "Limited Monarchy".

XX: Aristocracy's Sins Against Itself

All those people, whether historians, politicians or mere voting proletarians — and there are still many of them — who, on the strength of Louis XVI's death and the lamentable history of the Bourbon Dynasty so brilliantly started by Henry IV, are prepared to condemn hereditary monarchy and even to question the validity of the laws of heredity as well, should have serious doubts about their rapacity to learn any useful lessons whatsoever from the history of their race.

For brief though my account of this French dynasty had necessarily to be, it has I hope been in all essentials accurate; and what it teaches is the very reverse of what Liberals have persistently believed.

First of all, it shows conclusively that the failure of Henry IV's successors casts no adverse reflection whatsoever on hereditary monarchy as an institution and secondly that, far from invalidating the laws of heredity, it proves on the contrary that they are so constantly reliable that when they are ignored they exact a penalty proportionate to the gravity of their infraction. In view of the gross errors committed by their forebears in the matter of mating, only if Louis XIII, XIV, XV and XVI had been superb specimens of humanity and exemplary monarchs, could any intelligent student of history have reasonable grounds for doubting the validity of the laws of heredity.

The facts relating to the failure and decline of our European aristocracy, although somewhat similar to those accounting for the evanescence of *genuine* monarchy (i.e. monarchy in which the king really rules and does not merely "reign" (*à l'anglaise*), are however sufficiently peculiar to demand a special inquiry. And this is all the more necessary as their own sins against themselves and their Order have from the very first been overlooked by the Liberal intelligentsia who have consistently ascribed the vices of the rule of the "Best", not to the absence of the Best, but to the inevitable defects of the institution of Aristocracy as such.

At all events, the decline of Aristocracy in the civilisation of the West has in one sense been less forgivable, because more avoidable, than that of genuine monarchy, and for the simple reason that nowhere

have aristocratic families felt themselves under the perilous obligation of ransacking the whole Continent for suitable mates of so-called "Blue-blood."

They were thus spared this potent source of blood-adulteration and were free to choose mates for their sons and daughters among families who were at least of their own nationality and more or less of their own type. Only when, as we shall see, this liberty was abused and their sons stooped, in response to a romantic misunderstanding of their overpowering lust, to choose mates unlikely to help in maintaining the family quality, was this most important advantage over Royalty forfeited.

Apart from this one advantage which was peculiar to their Order, the sins the aristocrats committed against themselves and against the political institution to which they gave effect, were in many respects similar to those committed by Royalty. A brief preliminary examination of these sins may now serve as a preface to the more elaborate treatment of them which will follow.

Although empirically the fact has been known to farmers and live-stock breeders for thousands of years, most of the aristocratic houses of Europe failed to understand, or never knew, that as the laws of heredity do not guarantee the transmission of a family's most precious qualities to its first-born male, the principle of primogeniture was bound in countless cases to mean a fall, not merely in the quality of their rule, but also in that of their stock. Occasionally difficulty might arise in deciding which of two or more sons was the superior, and where differences happened to be slight the rule of primogeniture might leave the family line unaffected one way or the other. But there could be no excuse for observing the rule when the senior son was palpably inferior, and to insist on doing so could only call down disaster on his stock.

Apart from the rule of primogeniture, however, there were often other considerations, politic, financial or otherwise acquisitive, which led aristocratic families to seek mates for their sons, who from the point of view neither of physique nor of character, were likely to help in maintaining the quality of the stock. And in this respect the Aristocracy often sinned as gravely as did the Royal Houses, and with much less excuse. When, as too often happened, both the rule of primogeniture and an unwise marriage combined in one generation to impair the quality of a family line, the deterioration was of course conspicuous and irreparable. Yet there were no traditions and no regulations within

the Order, whether in England, France, Germany or Spain, to prevent such happenings.

Generation after generation, the aristocrats failed to apply the principle that the Sanctity of Private Property resides in its relation to its appropriate owners: therefore, that it is desecrated whenever it is transferred to an owner unqualified to possess it, whereby the community is impoverished.

This aristocratic attitude to Private Possessions was recognised above all in Mediaeval times, when, owing to the terms under which land was held and the military implications of its tenure, daughters and widows of land-owners were compelled by their Feudal Lord to marry only a man of his choice.

This was a necessary and logical result of the view of Private Propperty's Sanctity which I have described as aristocratic. Because only a well-informed authority — certainly not the spinster heiress herself or the widow — was in a position to select the man least likely to desecrate the Sanctity of the Private Holding.

Hallam tells us, "Neither the maiden's coyness nor the widow's affliction, neither aversion to the proffered candidate nor love to one more (romantically) favoured, seem to have passed as legitimate excuses. Only one plea could come from the lady's mouth who was resolved to hold her land in single blessedness. It was that she was past sixty years of age; and after this unwelcome confession the Lord could not decently press her into matrimony." (*View of the State of Europe During the Middle Ages*, Vol. I, Part I, Chap. II).

In spite of the compelling reasonableness of this custom, it was naturally regarded as oppressive by the women concerned, especially if (as was usually the case) they utterly failed to appreciate its *raison d'être*; and many Liberal-minded people, including even some historians, are sufficiently shallow and imbued with the modern vulgar attitude to Property, to agree with the popular female view of Feudal times. Even Hallam himself speaks of the usage as appearing "outrageous to our ideas."

Why? — Only because we have long lost all conception of a proper understanding of the Sanctity of Private Property and, like the vulgar crowd, approve when a wealthy heiress, swept off her feet by a film star, makes him wholly or partly the administrator of her financial power to command the services of her fellow men.

Generation after generation of aristocrats in both England and on the Continent of Europe have failed to respect the obligation privilege

imposes, with the result that high rank itself became almost a synonym of oppression and licence.

"There are no rights whatever," said Coleridge, "without corresponding duties." (*Table Talk*, 20.9.1831). And the very fact that he thought it necessary, six years before Victoria ascended the throne, to pronounce this doctrine without dreading to sound platitudinous, is a sad reflection on his Age and the years that followed. How the aristocrats had long overlooked the doctrine in question and continued to do so, and how they thus contributed to the contempt in which all privilege and property came to be held, so that finally a semblance of validity was imparted to the most extreme forms of Socialism, is now a matter of history. And if to-day the idea of possessions beyond those necessary for supplying the needs of bare sustenance has, in the minds of the common people, come to mean no more than the wherewithal for having "a good time", we may with perfect justice ascribe this untoward change to the influence of a misguided aristocracy.

For when once, thanks to the example of the mighty, the personal control of affluence was believed by the masses to be no more than a means of living in the best hotels, going to the most expensive tailors, and wintering in the sunshine of the Mediterranean, they soon learnt that there was nothing at all difficult about it. On the contrary, anybody could do it; and forthwith privilege without corresponding duties became the order of the day. How this inevitably culminated in the Communist belief that the best administrator of wealth is the State, hardly requires explaining.

The aristocracies of most European countries, and certainly of England, France and Germany, committed the fatal error of omitting to establish within their own Order a supervising body or council, composed of the most respected and experienced among them, which could function both as the Authority responsible for defining the behaviour-standards of the Order, and as a disciplinary board before which nobles who had brought disgrace un themselves and their Order could be arraigned and punished, if necessary by total demotion.

Had such a supreme council of aristocrats been established in England, for instance, we should have been spared the ignominy of having led the world into the sophistries and psychological fallacies of Liberalism, and we should have escaped all the rigours, political and social, which this political philosophy (or lack of it) has brought in its train. Above all our civilisation would have preserved the only practical method of creating for the masses a model or pattern for

a decent way of life. As we have seen, Government has not only an administrative function. Equally important is its duty of setting a good Tone in the community; and the ideal means of doing this is not by pulpit exhortation which is futile, but by giving effect to the emulative instincts of the populace and setting a worthy and impressive example constantly before them. Only an aristocracy is capable of performing this important function; and the fact that to-day the general tone of our society has suffered a marked decline, is the best proof we could have of the absence of a genuine aristocracy amongst us.

It is, however, essential always to bear in mind that although these sins which the aristocrats have committed, have imposed hardships on the general population, their principal victims have been the aristocrats themselves and the Class and Order which they represent, and that the most conspicuous howler of Liberal philosophy has been consistently to look on these sins as inherent in the political institution of Aristocracy itself.

XXI: Quality in Human Heredity

"Nothing is so characteristic of the twentieth century," says Mr. K. G. Collier, "as the critical and questioning attitude with which men in general regard those possessed of higher status than themselves, particularly if it is inherited from the past." (*The Social Purposes of Education*, Part 1, Chap. III).

"Particularly if it is inherited from the past "! — And why is this so very common to-day? — Because everywhere in Europe the mob, high and low, has been indoctrinated with the Liberal heresy that heredity plays no part in human breeding, and that therefore special endowments cannot be transmitted from one generation to another. So often and for so many centuries have the masses seen the offspring of once respected rulers turn out to be in all respects inferior to their forebears that, without the need of any instruction from glib Liberal intellectuals, they have in their own ill-informed and superficial way, come to believe that heredity in human pedigrees may be ignored.

Thus a teacher like Professor Ashley Montagu can, without any fear of compromising his scientific reputation in our modern world, publicly proclaim that "the one thing we cannot do is to prove or demonstrate that differences of behaviour and culture have anything to do with inherited or innate qualities." (*Man's Most Dangerous Myth*, Chap. 15).

This remark addressed even to an amateur cattle breeder or poultry farmer, would provoke no more than a laugh. But pronounced before an audience of gullible modern Liberals (and who is not a Liberal to-day?), it is greeted with thundering applause. — Perhaps excusably enough! For it is a doctrine that must bring enormous comfort to the low-bred, with which our world pullulates.

I have suggested that the suspicion now felt by countless nobodies that exceptional gifts, whether of mind or body, are all pure accident and bear no relation to antecedent family histories, is due chiefly to the persistent failure displayed by our European Royalties, Aristocrats and distinguished Plebeians to maintain any outstanding quality in their family lines. And, as modern Science continues to discover ever more

and more reasons for dismissing this suspicion as unfounded and as attributable only to what logicans call "the Fallacy of the False Cause"; we have before us the strange spectacle of set after set of geneticists, sociologists, and psychologists now coming forward with compelling evidence in support of a belief which our fore-fathers took so much for granted as hardly to think it worth mentioning — that all lofty as well as lowly characteristics, far from owing anything to chance or accident, may invariably be traced to antecedent factors hereditarily transmitted.

To quote Rehoboam, Solomon's son; Goethe's son, August; Napoleon's son, the Duke of Reichstadt, or Commodus, the son of Marcus Aurelius, as confuting this conclusion, is merely to hold up the argument to no purpose. Because the laws of heredity would have been rather invalidated than confirmed had any one of the four sons I have mentioned been a patch on his father. Of the debaters who raise an objection of this kind, how many ever think of asking themselves what sort of persons, Naamah, Christine Vulpius, Marie Louise and the younger Faustina were?

Apart from the fact that she belonged to a tribe — the Ammonites who were sufficiently estranged from the people of Judah to offer some resistance to them on more than one occasion, we know little about Naamah, Rehoboam's mother. But we know that Solomon was sufficiently voluptuous not to be too particular about the sort of women with whom he cohabited provided they gratified his lust. Rehoboam's marked inferiority to his father, which was displayed from the first, is and above all in the unwise decision he made which led to the division of the Monarchies of Judah and Israel, may, I suggest, therefore be safely ascribed to the influence of his mother's characteristics in his blood.

As to Christine Vulpius, she may have been an admirable *ménagère* for Goethe. She was devoted to him, patiently suffered many humiliations at the hands of his friends and acquaintances because of her lowly origin, and once even risked her life to save his. But no one would dream of regarding her as Goethe's ideal mate if the object was to obtain the best possible results from breeding from such a man. She was a vulgar little thing, with no interests or gifts that would have unsuited her for marriage with a sweep, a coalminer or a farm-labourer; and she was much more prone to follow in her drunken father's footsteps than to drink copiously at the fountain of her exalted husband's immortal works.

Were Marie Louise and the younger Faustina worthy mates of then highly endowed husbands? — We know they were nothing of the sort. Marie Louise was an empty-headed, frivolous and unfaithful spouse, whom Madelin, the greatest historian of the period, describes as "a sensualist" of "limited intelligence" (*The Consulate and the Empire*, 1936, Vol. II, Chap. XXXIV); whilst the younger Faustina, as everyone except her husband knew, was a shameless strumpet, whose debaucheries were the scandal of the Age.

How therefore, on similar lines, can we hesitate to assume that the mother, and not a merely unfortunate shuffling of the stock's and the father's qualities, was responsible for Pericle's foolish sons, Paxalos, Xantippos and Clinias; or for Aristoppos's infamous son Lysimachus, and Thucydides' poorly gifted offspring, Milesius and Stephanos?

Besides, of the four disappointing sons of great fathers discussed above, the second, was Goethe's only surviving child, so that even if Christine had been entirely worthy of her husband, August's defects would not have provided any conclusive argument against heredity; for on the strength of a vast amount of data we know that the best combinations and permutations of a stock's characters do not necessarily appear in the first-born. And the same may be said of the Duke of Reichstadt and Commodus.

But as human heredity is not the only subject on which Liberal sophistry has corrupted popular opinion, we have everywhere to restate as pure novelties truths which wiser generations took for granted. — No wonder R. Ruggles Gates felt entitled to state that "the mental capacity of modern man has not increased during the historical period." (*Heredity in Man*, 1929, p. 330). Unfortunately, the organs of publicity from which the masses obtain their so-called free and "independent judgments" on all matters, always soft-pedal when purveying any scrap of knowledge that happens to conflict with the prevalent Liberalism of the "Establishment."

Our popular Press dues not, for instance, report Professor Raymond Cattell as saying that "81 *per cent* of the variance in general intelligence is due to heredity" and only "19 *per cent* to environmental differences" (*An Introduction to Personality Study*, Chap. II); nor Dr. F. A. E. Crew when he assures us that "there is a growing body of critical evidence which tends to show that . . . inherited differences in mental qualities and capacities do indeed exist and are responsible for much of the observed diversity in human mentality. . . . it is recognised that an eminent man is more likely to have eminent relatives than is the

average man; that superior ability would seem to be in some measure a family affair, that a superior father is more likely to have a superior son than is a father of ordinary intellectual attainments." (*Organic Inheritance in Man*, 1927, pp. 2–3).

Naturally, all these resuscitated fundamental truths strike a serious blow at that latest Liberal hoax according to which we are supposed to believe that racial differences are quite insignificant and therefore that "Racial Discrimination" is both wrong and superstitious — the peculiar fad of Fascists and Nazis. And it is significant that even when acknowledged scientific authorities make statements such as those I have quoted, they do so to-day with timid moderation, as if they were well aware of how heretical they will sound to modern corrupted readers.

Dr. G. Revesz, in a detailed survey of the problem, gives us impressive examples of the transmission of great gifts from one generation of men to their progeny. He shows how in music, for instance, such prodigies as Lully, Handel, Schubert, Rossini, Saint-Saens, Berlioz, Liszt and Stravinsky, all came from families highly gifted musically. He also points out that when both parents are musically gifted, 85 *per cent* of their children are also; when only one parent is so gifted, 58 *per cent* of their children inherit musical gifts; and when neither parent is musical only 25 *per cent* are likely to display any musical capacity. Of 74 composers, 22 *per cent* inherited musical talent from both parents, 25 *per cent* from father only, and 12 *per cent* from mother only. In Bach's family eleven important composers appeared in 8 generations. (*Talent und Genie*, Part III, i, and Part IV, ii).

Further important statistics relating to the inheritance of gifts of various kinds are given by Professor Kretschmer in Chap. IV of his book, *The Psychology of Genius*, 1931; whilst Francis Galton, in his *Hereditary Genius*, published 95 years ago, adduced much evidence to prove the operation of heredity in the families and descendants of great men. But none of these findings made the slightest impression on either our aristocracy or the Liberal intelligentsia.

In short, as Professor J. A. Thomson concluded many years ago, "the fundamental importance of inheritance was long ago demonstrated up to the hilt." (*Heredity*, 1920, p. 9). And over half a century ago, W. C. D. Whetham and C. D. Whetham, in their book, *The Family and the Nation* (Chap. V), warned us that "A study of pedigrees in such books of reference as the *Dictionary of National Biography*, leads irresistibly to the conclusion that continued ability and eminence in

a family depends solely on sound marriages. . . . As long as ability marries ability a large proportion of able offspring is a certainty."

"A certainty!" — How silly, if not nonsensical, does the passage quoted from Professor Ashley Montagu's 1944 publication appear in the light of all this authoritative testimony!

But even if it had been heeded (which is unlikely anyhow), the Whethams' warning came too late to save the aristocracies of the West. If a young woman crossed their path who happened to fire their lust, their requirements were met. What their children would be like, or would be fit for, was irrelevant; for was not heredity a myth in any case?

XXII: Primogeniture and Selection in Matrimony

Other influences apart, the matrimonial policies of our aristocracy alone would have sufficed to undermine the nation's faith in their ability to govern.

However rare the occurrence may have been we know that for centuries, especially in France and England, the nobility of Europe produced personalities who, had they maintained their family qualities, might have bred a race of rulers capable of kindling an unquenchable faith in the reality, advantage and indispensability of a class of thoroughbreds in the seat of government. For, as J. B. Rice has truly observed, "an aristocracy of blood is eternally right, because it is natural." (*Social Hygiene*, p. 328).

But from the earliest times, alas!, owing to the absence of any controlling body within their Order, they not only violated every precept of sound rulership, but also every measure which might have ensured a continuance of ability, dignity and even ordinary health in their family lines.

In vain, as early as the sixteenth century, sages arose who inveighed against the notion that infatuation alone was not to be trusted as the motive for a sound marriage; because the privileges of a Ruler Caste involved corresponding sacrifices incompatible with the irresponsible self-indulgence which was one of the few luxuries of the masses. But no aristocrat lent an ear to such admonitions. *"Un bon mariage, s'il en est un,"* said Montaigne, *"refuse la compagnie et conditions de l'amour."* ("A good marriage, if such there can be, will have nothing to do with love and its associations.") In an earlier essay he wrote, *"Je ne vois point de mariages qui failles plutôt et se troublent que ceux qui s'acheminent par la beauté et le désir amoureux."* ("I know of no marriages that come more rapidly to grief than those which result from the lure of beauty and erotic desire." *Essais*, Livre IV, Chap. IV, and Livre III, Chap. V.) And two centuries later the very man who did most to launch the Romantic Movement in Europe, actually declared,

"Ce qui nous abuse . . . c'est la pensée que l'amour est nécessaire pour former un heureux mariage." (J. J. Rousseau *La Nouvelle Héloise*, IIIe Partie Lettre XXe. "What leads us astray is the idea that love is necessary for a happy marriage"). Here, as we see, Rousseau scoffs not merely at the notion of the indispensability of love for a sound marriage, but even for a happy marriage. And could anyone of us, aware of the state of our society, object? Are our "Love" marriages, even among the masses such a roaring success?

Almost two centuries after Rousseau, Paul Adam warned his contemporaries that *"Il ne faut pas épouser uniquement par plaisir."* (*La Morale de L'Amour*, 1907, Chap. XI: "We should not marry merely for pleasure."). And it is almost certain that in pronouncing this warning he had not only the *élite* of his world in mind.

It would doubtless be wrong to interpret these Frenchmen's warnings as a total proscription of affection and attachment from among the motives for a sound marriage. But what Montaigne in particular felt — and quite properly — was that, at all events in ruler families, it was suicidal to allow this one factor to be paramount.

From the earliest times, in England certainly, the nobility were always inclined to allow other considerations than the preservation of their family quality to determine their choice of a mate. And many examples of this recklessness could be adduced, even in an Age as remote as that of the Fastens in the Mediaeval times. (See my *Quest of Human Quality*, Chap. VIII.) But from early in the eighteenth century and onwards, the record has been shocking.

From 1735 (if not 1732) to 1945, the nobility of England chose 42 actresses as wives, and among the men concerned there were 7 Dukes, including one Royal one; 3 Marquesses, 17 Earls, 1 Viscount and 14 Barons. The Duke of Leinster who married twice, chose an actress on both occasions. Even the vulgar Romans at least aspired to something better than this; for, according to the Lex Julia (13 B.C.), senators and their children were forbidden to marry a libertine, or a woman whose father or mother had followed an *Ars Ludicra* (meaning of course acting).

This is not to suggest that actresses are necessarily depraved, or that, as Schopenhauer maintained, they and actors follow a profession which stands low in the hierarchy of the Arts. For in the creation of new rôles, alone, they are often called upon to exercise considerable psychological insight and a profound knowledge of human character. But it is surely not unreasonable to question whether actresses may be

expected to possess those qualities and family traditions required by a class depending for its survival as a ruling *élite* upon the maintenance of its hereditary gifts for government.

Nor do I mean to suggest that occasional alliances between the scions of the Aristocracy and the daughters of Commoners are always to be deprecated. — On the contrary, when such maidens are chosen from *roturier* families with unblemished records both of health and ability, known to have been a credit to their locality, the refreshment a ruler stock may thus receive is wholly to be commended. It must seriously be questioned, however, whether such attributes as I have briefly enumerated, often constituted the essential conditions under which unions of this kind were contracted, especially when the primary object was to replenish the coffers of an impoverished noble line.

At all events, in the long list of rich roturier heiresses who became the wives of English nobles, there is often little evidence of any exacting discrimination other than that concerning the bride's financial prospects.

In 1798, for instance, Alexander Baring (later Lord Ashburton) married Anne Louisa Bingham, daughter of a rich Philadelphia merchant; but there is no evidence that she possessed any title to *élite* status except her great wealth. And much the same may be said of the marriages that followed — that of the future Lord Erskine to Frances Cadwalader, also of Philadelphia; those of the three Caton girls, belonging to the wealthy family of the Carrols of Carrolstown, one of whom became the Marchioness of Caermarthen (later Duchess of Leeds); another married Baron Stafford, and the third became the second wife of the Marquess of Wellesley (1825).

Later on, probably in similar circumstances, Jennie Jerome, daughter of the rich Wall-Street Broker, Leonard Jerome, and great granddaughter of an Iroquois Indian, married Randolph Churchill; and in 1876 Viscount Mandeville, heir to the 7th Duke of Manchester, married Consuela Iznaga. She did not bring her disreputable husband great wealth, but enough to make him forget that she too was a mongrel offspring of a New England woman and a Cuban. In 1895 Mary Leiter, daughter of the rich Jew Levi Leiter, who had acquired his fortune in trade, married Lord Curzon, and in 1904 Levi's younger daughter married the 19th Earl of Suffolk. Meanwhile, in 1903, a Miss Goelet, of rich American parents was chosen as wife by the Duke of Roxburgh.

And so it went on. The 4th Marquess of Anglesey had married Mary Livingstone King of Sanhills (1880); the Duke of Marlborough married

Consuelo Vanderbilt (1895: fortune 15,000,000 dollars); the Earl of Yarmouth married Alice Thaw (1903: fortune 10,000,000 dollars). But it would be tedious to prolong the list.

Does anyone suppose that these American heiresses brought any valuable ruler qualities to the families they entered? — It may be that some of the Southern families of America were of good English stock with genuine aristocratic instincts and traditions.

But whether this was so or not, and whether the nobles who married the daughters from such homes were still regenerate enough for their stock to benefit from any ruler virtues their wives may have contributed to it, only the ultimate result of these marriages could show; and as no actual revival of aristocratic ability followed these *mariages de convenance*, the refreshment they brought to the various families concerned appears to have been of little avail. (For most of the above details I am indebted to Lady Elizabeth Eliot's able and entertaining book, *They all Married Well*, 1960).

It is, however, not without significance, as reflecting on Francis Galton's understanding of what was at stake in these marriages that all he found to say about them was that they helped to promote the extinction of our noble families.

For "an heiress, being usually someone with no brothers and sisters," and therefore probably deriving from infertile stock, she became a means of limiting the progeny of our noble families. But this was a less important consequence of these misalliances than the fact that, apart from the fortunes they brought their husbands, they did little, if anything, to check the downward trend of the aristocracy. On the contrary, in view of then antecedents is probable that they helped to accelerate it.

Many a sober historian who feels more inclined to judge the success or failure of a War-Leader by the conditions prevailing *after* the conflict is over, rather than from the bald fact that the enemy was finally routed, may even perhaps entertain doubts whether the case of Jennie Jerome overwhelmingly vindicates the principle of our aristocracy, throughout the nineteenth century, of marrying heiresses.

For, after all, the actual winning of a war by the defeat of the enemy in the field, is the outcome of the skill, the prowess and the sacrifice of the soldiers themselves; whilst the onus of proving that all this skill and sacrifice was worth while politically — i.e. by the improved political conditions that this victory has secured — rests with the statesmen and politicians of the winning side. And, judged in this way, many a

patriot may well entertain legitimate doubts even about the fruits of the Jennie Jerome match.

Speaking of the English nobility of the seventeenth century Buckle says, "The influence of the richer ranks was, in England, constantly diminishing" (*History of Civilisation in England*, Vol. II, Chap. III); whilst Matthew Arnold, referring to a generation two centuries later, observes, "I cannot doubt that in the aristocratic virtue, in the intrinsic commanding force of the English upper classes there is a diminution. . . . At the very moment when democracy becomes less and less disposed to follow and admire, aristocracy becomes less and less qualified to command and captivate." (*Essay on Democracy*).

As early as the sixteenth century the nobility must already have been scandalously incompetent; for, as W. Percival points out, Elizabeth, who had an eye for efficiency if for little else, "gave them [the peers] little or nothing to do." (*The Future of the House of Lords*, Chap. II).

Even if marriages in the higher ranks of society had always been the wisest possible for the preservation of the stock's best qualities, how could the aristocracy have hoped to maintain a high standard of honour and ability if by a process of blind selection they always acted as if taking for granted that their first-born males must represent the best permutation and combination of their family genes? Yet this is precisely what the rule of primogeniture implied.

Marc Bloch (*Feudal Society*) tells us that even in mediaeval royal houses primogeniture was not accepted without much opposition, and that in certain country districts hoary traditions favoured the choice of one of the sons at the expense of the others. In the case of a fief immemorial usage "seems to have recognised the Lord's right to grant it to the son whom he considered best fit to hold it." In Germany, in particular, there was much reluctance to grant binding force to the rule of primogeniture; and it will be remembered that the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa himself, in 1169, "arranged for the crown to pass to a younger son." Indeed, Wolfram von Eschenbach, in *Parzifal* (I, verse 4, 5) described primogeniture as an "outlandish" custom, an "alien trick! "

The reader will recall what has already been said about the rule of primogeniture in Chapter IX *ante* and about its relatively late adoption in England. But in confirmation of Marc Bloch's testimony, it is interesting to read in Jacob Burckhardt's *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, that, just as among the early Israelites other sons than the first-born were sometimes known to succeed, so, many of the

Italian dictatorships of the fifteenth century thought that "The fitness of the individual, his worth and his capacity, were of more weight than both the laws and usages which prevailed in the West in establishing his claim to succession." And this was the principle applied even in the case of bastards.

Leaving aside the aristocracy, even if we restrict our enquiry to plebeian families, we shall easily convince ourselves that relatively few of them lend the slightest support to the belief that the best combinations of the qualities of a family line necessarily appear in first born offspring.

I am well aware of the fact that this does sometimes happen. We have but to think of Velasquez, Hobbes, Milton, Heine, Corneille, Molière, Racine, Keats, Swinburne, Browning, Carlyle, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Columbus, Dryden, Gibbon, Thackeray, Macaulay, Ruskin, Gissing, Meredith, Herbert Spencer, Hegel, Leonardo da Vinci, Chopin, Locke, Newton, Watts (painter) and Rossini; all of whom were either eldest or only sons, in order to appreciate that the vagaries of the hereditary processes sometimes appear to justify mankind's faith in the rule of primogeniture — the legendary sanctity of "whatsoever openeth the womb". (*Exodus*, XIII, 2). The error lies in assuming that we may stake on their always doing so. And unless noble families differ in this respect from *roturiers*, the same uncertainty concerning inheritance must prevail among the offspring of aristocrats as among those of middle-class people.

Against the list of first-born given above, therefore, it is well to remember that among plebeians of note who came at least 14th in their families were, Edward Lear (21st child), Charles Wesley (18th child), Sir Thomas Lawrence (16th child), John Wesley (15th child), and Albert Moore (14th child). Among famous *roturiers* who came thirteenth in their families were, Sir Richard Arkwright and Josiah Wedgwood; whilst Sir John Franklin was a 12th son, and Henry Steinway, who built the first Steinway piano was his parents' 12th child.

Thomas Campbell, Charles Reade, Ignatius Loyola and Lamarck were all eleventh children, and J. E. Thorold Rogers was an eleventh son. Benjamin Franklin, John Hunter (physiologist), Coleridge, Benjamin West, were tenth children. Lord Cromer was a ninth son; whilst Butler (of the *Analogy*), Lord Lawrence (Gov. Gen. of India), and Sebastian Bach were all three 8th children.

Among famous plebeians who came seventh in their families, are Herrick, William Hunter (physiologist), Kierkegard, Van Dyck, T. H.

Huxley, James Martineau, Jane Austen, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Sir Francis Galton: whilst Rubens and Botticelli were both sixth sons. Rob. Schumann, Emily Brontë (greatest European woman of genius), Charles Darwin, De Quincey, Voltaire, Samuel Butler (*Hudibras*), Oliver Goldsmith, Oliver Cromwell, Sir Walter Besant and Rembrandt, all came fifth in their families; and Alfred the Great, Bossuet, Cecil Rhodes, and Horace Walpole were all fifth sons.

Schubert, Emerson, Rossetti (Christina), Tennyson, Tolstoy, Cobden, James Watt, Feuerbach, Wellington, Gladstone, Bentham, and Darwin (Erasmus), were all 4th children; whilst Andrea del Sarto, Fanny Burney, David Hume, Dürer, David Garrick, Smollett, Condillac, Descartes, Charles Lamb, Rubinstein, Shakespeare, Hazlitt and William Morris, all came third in their families.

Finally, all the following were third sons: Lord Clarendon, Bulwer Lytton, Landseer, Cardinal de Retz, Turgot, Jos. Chamberlain, Jenner, Richelieu, Montaigne, Ricardo, Trollope, Samuel Wilberforce, Nelson, Romanes, Mivart and Napoleon.

Thus, unless we have any reason to assume that in the hereditary processes of noble families different; laws operate from those governing inheritance among *roturiers*, the rule of primogeniture must in countless cases in the past have deprived aristocratic families of both honour and the qualities which secure it, and we can hardly doubt that it would have been in the best interests of the Order of Aristocracy itself and of the nations where aristocracies rule, if some better system of inheritance had been devised — that it to say, one which would at least have allowed for the selection of the best successor to the male parent's title instead always of the eldest among his sons.

XXIII: The Profanation of Private Property

Aristocracy's failure to demonstrate that Private Property has a Sanctity justifying its existence as an institution, but one which can only too easily be desecrated, is abundantly illustrated in the history of Europe; and apart from preaching the duty of Charity, the Church did little to mend matters.

Thus, Freedom, in the sense of licence, emancipation from onerous obligations and the right to unlimited leisure, became the principal if not the only Property distinctions that separated the *élite* from the common people. And, at the dawn of the nineteenth century, if one were looking for any gross breaches of self-discipline, decency and good order, one necessarily looked upwards and not downwards in the social hierarchy.

When Oscar Wilde declared that the function of the lower classes was to teach the aristocracy morality, he was probably only joking; but had the remark not contained a half-truth it would have had little point. Speaking of this aristocracy, Esme Wingfield Stratford says, "It had abdicated its functions and degenerated into a mob of barbarians, who had reverted to the primitive routine of the chase." (*The Victorian Tragedy*, 1940). Matthew Arnold, speaking of this same class, wrote: "Its splendour of station, its wealth, show and luxury, is then what the other classes really admire in it, and this is not an elevating admiration." (*Essay on Equality*, 1884).

Indeed, by unremittingly collating superior rank with the mere ability to inspire the multitude with wonder at the power of affluence, the *élite* were principally responsible for spreading the belief that among the surest titles to worthiness was the unfailing capacity at all times to pay one's way handsomely.

"Riches and the signs of riches," said John Stuart Mill as he contemplated the world in late Victorian days, "were almost the only things really respected, and the life of the people was mainly devoted to the pursuit of these." (*Autobiography*, p. 171).

Everything was forgiven a man who could dazzle his generation by his ability to display conspicuous wastefulness. What harm could therefore attend the confiscation of such wealth, whether by extortionate Income Tax, Death Duties, or even Capital Levies?

The moment affluence became the only appreciable hall-mark of aristocratic dignity and merit, the only stepping stone to it, and ceased to be the essential accompaniment of lofty duties, Aristocracy may be said to have committed suicide. Carlyle was one of the first to recognise this and is reported to have told Monckton Milnes in 1848, "The English aristocracy just now are to me a most tragic spectacle. Wonderful how they undertake that suicidal enterprise of theirs, how they endure their vacant existence." (*Monckton Milnes*, by James Pope-Hennessey, Chap. XIII).

But the rot had set in long before Carlyle's time. Already in the reign of George III, "The Selwyn correspondence disclosed a rottenness in the Aristocracy which threatened to decompose the nation." (Emerson: *English Traits*, Chap. XI).

"If the aristocracy would remain the most powerful class," said Lord Lytton in 1883, "they must continue to be the most intelligent." (*England and The English*, Bk. III, Chap. I). Too true! But Lord Brougham was probably only stating the obvious when, in the early days of the nineteenth century, he said. "The want of sense and reason which prevails in these circles is wholly inconceivable." (*Thoughts Upon The Aristocracy*, ed. 1935).

Two highly trustworthy foreign observers, Professor William Dibelius and Count Hermann Keyserling, though desirous of doing justice to the class under discussion, both reached much the same conclusion concerning the intellect of its members. "*Dem Gentlemanideal dagegen,*" Professor Dibelius declared in 1923, "*fehlt jede Beziehung auf Kraft des Verstandes*" (*England*, Bk. I, Chap. IV: "The gentleman ideal lacks any sort of connection with mental power"); whilst Count Keyserling, in his *Reisebuch Eines Philosophen* (Part II), referring to the English aristocracy, said: "*Selbst die bedeutenderen unter ihnen . . . sind als geistige Wesen schwer ernst zu nehmen.*" ("It is difficult to take even the most prominent figures among them seriously as thinkers.")

Quality, apart from the ability to command expensive services, had long ceased to compel respect. The most skilled accomplishment was no longer measured by any other yardstick than that of cash. As Veblen maintained, "efficiency in any direction which . . . does not redound

to a person's economic benefit, is not of great value as a means of respectability.... One does not make 'much of a showing' in the eyes" of the world, "except by unremitting demonstration of the ability to pay," And he added that, in modern conditions, the Struggle for Existence "has been transformed into a struggle to keep up appearances." (*Some Neglected Points in the Theory of Socialism*, 1892).

Of course, with this Tone set in the nation by the *élite*, the masses were quick to emulate them. Indeed, to the astonishment of men like Ruskin and Morris, the worker himself never dreamt of ascribing even a small part of his discontent to the steady and insidious inroads the change from manufactured to machine-made goods had made upon Man's instinctive pleasure and pride in creation and individual achievement. All discontent and unrest arose merely from dissatisfaction will] the amount of reward received. Every enhancement of Labour's bliss was sought only in the worker's means of bearing comparison favourably with his neighbours — the Joneses!

"To my knowledge," says the Rev. V. A. Demant, "there has not since the birth of the Capitalist epoch ever been a 'quality strike', or a withdrawal of labour in protest at having to do bad or shoddy work." (*Religion and the Decline of Capitalism*, Chap. IV). — No! And why? — Because the notion of quality as distinct from the ability to pay your way handsomely, had long ceased to have any meaning. Referring to the social discontent of Labour in recent history, Veblen said its source was "the craving of everybody to compare favourably with his neighbour." (*Op. cit.*)

We know that this state of mind did not have its origin in the working classes. It derived from the *élite's* failure to set a decent Tone in the nation; and it is probable that even if no other factors had been at hand to favour a general revival of Wycliffe's Communistic teaching of the fourteenth century, the gradual vulgarisation incidental to the exaltation of mere affluence by the leading classes of the West, would have sufficed to rekindle the smouldering ashes of economic levelling which this mediaeval agitator advocated.

Naturally, superficial Liberal reasoning was quick to ascribe these deplorable developments to the institutional aspects of Aristocracy rather than to the personnel composing the aristocratic hierarchy. Worse still, instead of trying to rescue the principles which an unworthy nobility had desecrated, they accepted the situation as it stood, including the havoc generations of vulgarians had made of Private Property's Sanctify — not to mention the doctrine of "*noblesse*

oblige "— and proceeded to treat wealth as if it really were the "filthy lucre" that ill-bred plutocrats had made it.

Thus, they everywhere promoted measures which were designed to transfer the administration of as much as possible of the nation's wealth from the control of individual property-owners to the State. Overlooking most of the more vital means by which Private Property could still retain some of its Sanctity, they paved the way to thorough-going Socialism and its inevitable sequel — Communism, without ever once pausing to consider even the Tonal consequences, let alone the psychological factors, involved. For, at bottom, the gravest errors of Liberalism have been in the field of human psychology, in its misunderstanding of the motives and springs' of human conduct.

As it behoves me to be brief, let us consider that least sane of all the offspring of Liberal cogitation: nationalised industry and public services. We know that in such vast organisations the State becomes the universal task and pay Master, and the worker, from the highest to the lowest, merely a member of a hierarchy, every step forward in which depends on the approval of an immediate superior. So that ultimately in such a service a man's own and his family's security are in the hands of those just above him. Let him become a nuisance; let him be public-spirited enough to propose reforms which conflict with the prestige or prerogative of his superiors, and at one stroke he may imperil his chance of rising in the hierarchy.

Independent judgment, even when expert, thus always involves a risk; and in circumstances in which expert criticism might prevent a capital disaster, sullen and uneasy acquiescence is often preferred before the hazards of knowledgeable fault-finding, however justified.

In this short chapter, I cannot of course hope to illustrate by many spectacular examples the fatal error Liberalism has committed in assuming that, owing to the many desecrations of the Sanctity of Private Property perpetrated by past Property Owners, no vestige of Sanctity still clings to it.

Nevertheless, I propose to take one notorious and supreme example of a costly State blunder (if not crime) of the past, which will set before the reader a field of operation, wholly overlooked by Liberalism, in which even at this late hour there is still a possible function for the factor, Sanctity, in the administration of Private Property.

I refer to the appalling and unpardonable disaster which overtook the famous Airship *R.101* on the morning of Sunday, Oct. 5th 1930 at Beauvais. The ship was on its way to India and was only about

220 miles from its base at Cardington. It had the Secretary of State for Air, Lord Thomson of Cardington on board, and of the total of 54 passengers, including Lord Thomson, only 6 persons survived, 4 of whom were engineers in the power cars.

I cannot enter into all the details of the preparations which preceded the Airship's trip to India, or describe the measures taken by those principally concerned in getting the vessel fit for its tremendous undertaking. Nor can I enumerate all the errors of omission and commission made in equipping it successfully to survive the crucial test which the trip to India entailed (for incredible as it may sound, no adequate preliminary test of its capabilities was ever made before it set out on its first and last flight!); but suffice it to say that *at almost every stage* in its construction and, above all, in the subsequent last-minute and major modifications in its structure, *there is no trace of anything except slip-shod and careless supervision and even workmanship displayed by all those responsible for ensuring its air-worthiness*. No one could read about the culpable negligence of those whose duty it was to make sure of the soundness of the ship's outer cover (it was chiefly owing to serious rents in this fabric that the vessel foundered) without wholly concurring with the outcry of one solitary witness of the whole affair — an engineer who, as a mere distant observer, watched the complete course of *R.101's* short life. I refer to Mr. Nevil Shute's candid and courageous claim that *if only one* of the many men concerned with the construction and ultimate control of the Airship had been independent enough to speak up in time and to say: "No! It is all wrong. I refuse to agree to the plans for this ship's journey. I have no confidence whatsoever in its reliability and soundness. I maintain that it has never been adequately tested, and I wash my hands of the whole business!" — If only one man had thus spoken up in time, the disaster would have been averted.

The fact that no one in any way connected with the production of this ill-fated Airship, and with the preparations for its great flight, felt independent enough to come forward and utter such words as these, if necessary to Lord Thomson himself, was, according to Mr. Nevil Shute, the fundamental cause of the disaster — a disaster that not only caused the loss of millions of pounds to the Public, but also, and for ever, blotted the copy-book of all those Liberal idealists who imagine that the independence which an important Public servant may enjoy through the possession of private means, is a negligible factor in a nation's administrative and technological equipment.

Now listen to Mr. Nevil Shute himself:

"I do not know," he says, "the financial condition of the officials in the Air Ministry at the time of the *R.101* disaster. I suspect, however, that an investigation would reveal that it was England's bad luck that at that time none of them had any substantial private means. At rock bottom, that to me is probably the fundamental cause of the tragedy." (*Slide Rule*, Chap. 7).

Finally, with his daughter's and his publisher's permission, I must quote the following invaluable comment he makes on the principle involved:

"The officers who were brave in the Admiralty, were the officers who had an independent income, who could afford to resign from the Navy if necessary without bringing financial disaster to their wives and children.... These were the men who could afford to shoulder personal responsibility in the Admiralty, who could afford to do their duty to the Navy in the highest sense. Such men invariably gravitate towards the top of any government service that they happen to be in, because of their care-free acceptance of responsibility. They serve as a leaven and as an example to their less fortunate fellows; they set the tone of the whole office by their high standard of duty. I think this is an aspect of inherited incomes which deserves greater attention than it has had up till now. If the effect of excessive taxation and death duties in a country is to make all high officials dependent on their pay and pensions, then the standard of administration will decline and the country will get into greater difficulties than ever [which of course it is doing]. Conversely, in a wealthy country with relatively low taxation and much inherited income, a proportion of the high officials will be independent in their job, and the standard of administration will probably be high." (*Ibid*).

If there is such a thing as an After-Life, it would be interesting to know what Sir William Harcourt would have to say about the passage just quoted. At all events, I suggest that it might usefully be displayed in every schoolroom, every University Hall and every Council Chamber in the nation. Together with such history as that of the *R.101* it constitutes the flattest and most constructive refutation we possess of all the shallow Liberal clap-trap about "unearned incomes", and what is deceptively described as the "equitable distribution" of wealth.

In the sort of practical application of Private Property's Sanctity which Mr. Shute prescribes, we have the surest safeguard against such scandals as that of which I have supplied a supreme example. And since in the exercise of the kind of Public Spirit for which financial

independence provides, we possess the last vestige of that Sanctity which still attaches to Private Property appropriately owned, no effort should be spared to inculcate upon growing youth how precious this last vestige is.

The nation must salvage a minority which, in the hour of direst need, may be in a position to stand up and defy the "Establishment" and defeat erring Authority. Only the most reckless and most unscrupulous romanticist can believe that a complex society like ours can remain sound and flourishing without such an *élite* of *"Clercs"* — i.e. self-appointed and honourable watch-dogs — in Julien Benda's sense.

XIV: Privilege and Public Service

We now come to the third of the major crimes the Aristocracy have committed against their own Order, by which, in the eyes of the gullible multitude they seemed to justify the claims of Liberalism.

It is now a very far cry from the days when a William Fitzosbern (afterwards Earl of Hereford) at his own sole risk and expense undertook the formidable task of equipping and manning several vessels in order to enable his master, William of Normandy, to take possession of England. But at bottom, his was the spirit, the Public Spirit, which animated the nobility in Feudal times and laid the original foundations of what little fast-decaying aristocratic feeling still remains here and there in the nation.

For it was the Feudal System, so much derided to day, which gathered up all that was best in the ancient world relating to the uses of Power and Property, and created an intricate and decentralised administration consisting of graduated privileges and obligations extending without a gap from the meanest serf to the presiding monarch. Nor did Disraeli exaggerate when, in *Sybil*, having asked, "What is the fundamental principle of the Feudal System?" he replied, "that tenure of all property shall be the performance of duties." And it is significant that even in its most decadent form it still seemed to a man like Carlyle superior to the way of life which has superseded it.

"The express nonsense of old Feudalism, even now in its dotage," he said, "is nothing to the involuntary nonsense of modern anarchy, called 'Freedom'! (*Carlyle at His Zenith*, by David Alec Wilson, Bk. XVI, Chap. XXII).

At all events, in its early stages, whilst there was still a vigilant and able monarch to prevent abuses, the duties of the chief or lord under the Feudal System were so heavy with responsibility that, not only were men reluctant to undertake them (just as in all modern hierarchies, military, naval, or ecclesiastical, men often decline promotion out of fear of increased demands on their time and energies), but the community that urgently required leadership and authoritative administration, were often not only prepared, but also often constrained, to make

substantial sacrifices in order to lure and retain suitable candidates as their local governors. Such sacrifices might consist of *corvées* willingly offered and punctually performed, so as to give the chosen chief the necessary leisure to discharge his administrative duties. They might also consist of good and dignified quarters which were pressed upon him not only to ensure his residence in the locality but also to afford him a lodging befitting his functions. It is even likely that sometimes the lure amounted to a guarantee of hereditary rights to his progeny.

In any case, the final outcome was an organization of the country in which privilege was always inextricably connected with duty and public service of some kind. Nor was this duty bereft of protective and tone-setting features. The ideal was to bind together all ranks of society by means of mutual obligation and loyalty; and whilst nothing in the nature of absolute, independent or emancipated individual ownership existed, the right of Private Property was nevertheless sufficiently conceded to provide for the proper development of character and sound judgment.

It is easy to see that such a close nexus, maintained between the property-owner's character and his property, supplied what was needed to ensure the Sanctity of his holding. Unfortunately, however, it is equally easy to see how simple if not natural were the many directions in which the System could be abused, defiled and disfigured. Under unwatchful presiding monarchs, or monarchs who were themselves exploiters rather than protectors of the masses, oppression and tyranny could very soon prevail over the more benevolent and humane features of the system; and where, as in England, this system was run by overlords dealing with a conquered nation, there was of course in the early days a less scrupulous exercise of justice and charity than would probably have been the case if the common people had been of the same nationality as their overlords.

At all events, the fact that ultimately Feudalism did degenerate into a state of affairs in which the privileged and powerful held and used their powers without much thought of the corresponding duties and responsibilities which originally belonged to their position, is abundantly illustrated in the whole of European history (or major part of it) up to almost the present day. The natural iniquity of Man would be enough to account for this degenerative trend. But what facilitated and expedited it was, as I shall attempt to show in the next chapter, the absence of any wise method of disciplining and controlling the superior classes of the nation. Even these very classes themselves

seem not to have possessed that *instinct of self-preservation* which would have suggested to them some effective means of maintaining their quality so as to retain their privileges. It was the regimentation that was faulty, not the original conception of the System. And it is here that the customary practice of the Liberals always to claim a plus for every minus suffered by the aristocratic Order, is most typically displayed.

For an ideal of conduct, a programme of decent and honourable behaviour does not wilt and wither of its own accord. If it fails, its failure is due to human agencies — in this case to the deliberate sins of the aristocrats themselves against their own Order and its good name. And we have but to understand the moral contained in the etymology of our word Danger (See Chapter V *ante*) in order to appreciate the folly of condemning Aristocracy rather than the aristocrats themselves for the *débâcle* that overtook their Order and the Way of Life in a nation deprived of aristocratic leadership.

XXV: Indiscipline in Aristocracy

Of the major crimes committed by the aristocrats against their own Order, I shall now describe the most serious; for, had it not been committed, the previous three already dealt with would never have been heard of.

Reviewing the various ruler minorities which, ever since Feudal times, have seconded their monarchs in the government of European nations, it seems hardly credible that, with only one exception (possibly two), none had a sufficiently strong instinct of self-preservation to enforce among their Order such standards of virtue, competence, conscientiousness and even health, as alone could maintain them in authority, and above all demonstrate their indispensability.

Had any one of these minorities deigned to look beneath their class to learn what quite ordinary corporations were doing to effect precisely what they themselves should have effected to preserve their own quality and that of their regimen; if only they had glanced at such bodies as the various Craft Guilds, for instance, which soon after the eleventh century had begun to sprout up all over the Western World, they might have seen in operation an instinct of self-preservation so much superior to their own, as to shame, if not to fire and inspire them.

When we read of the measures the founders of these Craft Guilds devised to maintain high standards in their service to the public; to exact the utmost efficiency and decent behaviour from their members; to prevent fraud and slip-shod and unconscientious workmanship; to demand in the so-called "Masterpiece" (i.e. the work of his own hands, or *Chef-d'Oeuvre*, the craftsman had to produce to obtain his title of master of his Craft) a high standard of quality and expertise, together with such durability and soundness as would retain the confidence and good-will of the public — when, I say, we read about these early corporations and their regulations even in so brief a manual as Alfred Milnes' *From Guild to Factory* (1904), we can not help wondering how, with such examples constantly under their eyes, the aristocracies of Europe could have been frivolous and foolhardy enough to overlook the lesson they taught.

Nor, in the light of the present thesis is it uninteresting to note how Alfred Milnes, speaking of the aims and policies of these early Craft Guilds, uses the very terms with which I have described the motives that inspired them. Thus, in Chap. IV he says of "the formations of a guild" that it "became a kind of instinct of self-preservation" — precisely! He also speaks of the guild as consisting of the "aristocracy of labour". We should, however, not allow ourselves to be tempted to identify these ancient guilds with our modern Trade Unions; for whereas the former were concerned chiefly with the aristocratic purpose of maintaining high standards of quality in the performance of their members, our modern Trades Unions, initiated and organised along vulgar Liberal lines and steeped in Liberal sophistry, have but one abiding object, which is, at ever briefer intervals to levy blackmail on society for the higher remuneration of their members.

But no lesson that the ancient Guilds could have taught was learned by the aristocratic Orders, who neglected to adopt even the simplest precautionary measures for the control of their members. They even failed to devise the most elementary system of criticism and censure for dealing with those among their Order who fell sufficiently below the required standards of efficiency and competence to jeopardise their prestige and authority.

Yet, in view of what was at stake, both regarding their own survival and the welfare of their nation, is it not astonishing that nothing of the kind was attempted? And can we therefore be surprised that the Liberals, never too shrewd or intellectually upright, unhesitatingly accounted for Aristocracy's decline by maintaining as Paine did, that the institution of Aristocracy itself, was inherently unsound and worthless?

One political philosopher and ardent Liberal — Dr. David Spitz — evidently under the impression that he was advancing an unanswerable objection to the institution of Aristocracy, has asked vacantly and with just that modicum of humour which he knew would captivate Anglo-Saxon readers: "What if the aristocrat does wrong . . . but refuses to arrest, imprison or execute himself? We cannot look to another aristocrat for the remedy, not merely because the other aristocrat may also have done wrong, but because by the logic of this construction only the aristocrat himself can judge himself." (*Patterns of Anti-Democratic Thought*, Chap. 5, ii).

Numskull! Yet this kind of nonsense did not prevent a conservative publishing firm such as Macmillan & Co. from publishing Spitz's book!

If only the fellow had looked about him and seen how to-day vast Orders of highly skilled experts, such as the members of the Medical Profession, the Bar and the Law Society, contrive decade after decade to maintain their standards of efficiency, reliability and conscientious service, and thus to retain the confidence of the public; if only for one moment he had considered the gruelling tests which, for instance, Medical Boards of Examiners apply before allowing an aspirant to General Medical Practice to offer his skill to the public, and had remembered how defaulting doctors, arraigned before the Disciplinary Committee of the General Medical Council for "infamous conduct in a professional respect", are frequently struck off the Register of their Order and disqualified from any longer exercising their profession; and how solicitors guilty of practices unbefitting one of their profession, may be struck off the roll of solicitors by the Disciplinary Committee of the Law Society; — if, I say, Dr. Spitz had for one moment paused to dwell on such phenomena in the world about him, would he have felt so ready to pronounce that futile gibe against aristocratic rule? Can he have failed to observe that throughout their history the majority of European aristocracies had omitted to adopt the very measures against the decline and ultimate evanescence of their Order, which such *roturier* bodies as the old Craft-Guilds and certain modern professional societies were zealous enough to adopt and rigorously to apply?

Had he but for one instant grasped the consequences of this fatal omission, he could hardly have failed to see the absurdity of the facetious question he posed as a conclusive argument against aristocracy.

If, furthermore, he had learned from European history about an aristocracy which, better than any other, succeeded in maintaining itself with prestige, honour and power unimpaired for almost a thousand years, "without" as Professor Diehl says, "a revolution and almost without a change" — I refer to the Aristocracy of Venice — he would have made the acquaintance of a body of rulers whose system, with its internally organized disciplinary council, enabled them to excel, not only in achieving relative permanence, but also in conducting an administration famous for its benevolence, justice, and sagacity.

Professor Diehl describes it as "*probablement un des meilleurs qu'il y eut au monde*" (*Venise: République Patricienne*, Chap. III, Part II, Sect. vii. "probably one of the best the world has ever seen"); and he is abundantly confirmed by two such authorities as Bluntschli (*Theory of the State*, 1895, Bk. VI, Chap. XIX) and Burckhardt (*The Civilisation*

of the Renaissance in Italy, p. 63). Bluntschli speaks of the Venetian aristocracy's regimen as exceptional for "its strict and impartial justice!" whilst Voltaire declares that "*De tous les gouvernements de l'Europe celui de Venise était le seul réglé et uniforme.*" (*Essai sur les Moeurs*, Edit. 1879, Chap. VI: "Of all European governments that of Venice was the only one propperly conducted, stable and unchangeable.") The historian Lecky wholly concurs. "The most enduring aristocratic government", he says, "that the modern world has known, was that of Venice" (*Democracy and Liberty*, Vol. 1, p. 554).

And what was the secret of this exceptionally successful aristocratic achievement? — Simply that the Venetian aristocrats, being more realistic and more intellectually gifted and upright than those of other European States, first of all knew that they must allow for the natural iniquity of Man, even when it is clothed in ermine and silks; and secondly that, if they wished to survive as a ruling minority, they must devise a system of internal control and discipline designed to maintain a high standard of quality among the members of their Order and punish, if necessary with degradation, any one of them who fell below a certain level of decency and efficiency.

Their Council of Ten, founded in 1510, was a Watch Committee composed of ten patricians elected annually by the Grand Council from among the more illustrious of their Order, and it was presided over by Chiefs (*Capi dei Dieci*) whose term of office was one month only. Their function was to superintend the whole of the administration of the State, including especially the behaviour and performance of their fellow rulers and even of the Doge himself; and their powers were as absolute as their decisions were final.

Three times, in 1582, 1628 and 1792, attempts were made by dissident groups to abolish this Council, and every time, after exhaustive inquiries by the Grand Council, it triumphed over its critics, and its authority was vindicated.

Despite the strict discipline it exercised over them, or perhaps on that very account, it enjoyed the complete confidence of the majority of the ruling caste, and succeeded in upholding their authority, honour, quality and credit by the high standards it exacted. Indeed, Professor Diehl regards it as the strongest pillar of the régime. (*Venise: République Patricienne*, Chap. III, Sec. 5, vii and xvii).

Furthermore, to make assurance doubly sure, in addition to the functions of the redoubtable Ten, a rigorous form of discipline was exercised by the *Inquisitori del Doge defuncto*, whose function it was to

investigate the record of the Doge after his death and, in the case of any serious short-comings on his part, to penalise his family accordingly. Strange to say, a similar institution existed in ancient Egypt (*Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, by Wilkinson, 1878, Vol. III, pp. 453–454). May this perhaps explain the relative permanence of this remote civilisation?

Thus, contrary to the claims repeatedly advanced by Liberals and their advocates, there is no inherent defect or vice in aristocratic rule which prevents it from being the ideal form of government. All the major blemishes of this régime alleged by the ill-informed Liberal politicians and philosophers to be peculiar to the institution of Aristocracy itself, have been the wanton, arbitrary and far from inevitable creation of irresponsible aristocrats themselves; and Dr. Spitz's puckish query, with its quasi-learned reference to "the logic of this construction", turns out to be no more than a confession of ignorance.

XXVI: Habitual Anarchy

We have seen that, ever since the days of Wycliffe, the ideas which form the keystone of Liberalism have sprouted like indigenous flora in England, and their seed has been scattered over the whole of the modern world.

So deep is the hold which these ideas have fastened on humanity, that they have acquired, like the tenets of a universal religion, an odour of sanctity, and one is now considered respectable, if not decent, only on condition that one professes belief in them and sternly repudiates any other political principles.

The self-evident, apodictic nature of these ideas depends for the force of its appeal to modern man on a number of assumptions which we have examined, and all of which are fundamentally pessimistic and negative — that is to say, they deny the possibility of phenomena the existence of which Western humanity has been taught by its exceptionally unfortunate experience to doubt. In this sense they resemble the ideas which might be formed by the inmates of a Home for Incurables who, as the result of having constantly before their eyes the spectacle of disability and disease, are prepared to swear that Health, Sanity and Sweet Breath are wholly mythical.

A typical example of this attitude is that noticed by Mr John Masters who, as we have seen, has recently told us that "Modern thought does not look kindly on strong men" (*Bugles and a Tiger*, 1956, Chap. V); a remark which received striking confirmation only the other day in a very silly review of Mr Dean Acheson's *Sketches from Life* by the popular journalist, Sir Harold Nicolson.

Those who have read this book will know that in it the author makes no attempt to conceal his admiration of Portugal's strong man, Dr. Salazar. Now, Sir Harold Nicolson, commenting on the American's eulogy of the eminent Portuguese Statesman "who seemed to him," says the English journalist, "I regret to say, the possessor of a sane mind and even greater charm," then adds: "It is embarrassing for the representative of the Free World to say such things about a dictator." (The London *Observer*, 23.7.61).

Why does Nicolson "regret" that to Mr. Dean Acheson, Dr. Salazar "seemed the possessor of a sane mind and even greater charm"? Why is it "embarrassing for the representative of the Free World" to express admiration for a dictator? — Surely Sir Harold Nicolson knew that admiration for Dr. Salazar and his régime was not confined to American Statesmen. Had not that eminent English diplomat, Sir David Kelly, also paid a warm tribute to the Portuguese Prime Minister? In his book, *The Ruling Few* (Chap. VI), Sir David tells us how impressed he was, on returning to Portugal after an absence of 18 years, by the transformation Dr. Salazar's rule had effected. Can Sir Harold Nicolson have been unaware of this?

The fact is that in a few words I have quoted from Sir Harold Nicolson's book-review, the essence of Liberal pessimistic negativism regarding rulership is concentrated.

If it were true that Freedom and a decent Way of Life were possible only where mob-rule prevails and flappers hardly out of their teens are able to vote at every General Election, Sir Harold Nicolson's comments on Mr. Dean Acheson's praise of Dr. Salazar would be understandable. But to us who know from the experience of centuries that this bias against strong, able men — especially in politics — has been and still is an English Liberal obsession, and the consequence of the rarity in English history when Power has been allied to wisdom and virtue; to us who have seen Anarchy spread over the greater part of the earth owing precisely to this bias, these comments in a leading Sunday journal seem, wholly deplorable.

Yet it is unlikely that this was felt by any of the *Observer*'s regular readers.

In his *Lords of the Equator*, Lord Kinross, aware of the Liberal sentimentalism prevalent in England in his day, bitterly condemns it and throughout his book constantly blames British influence for the spread of indiscipline in Africa. (See particularly Part II, Chap. III, on the decline of discipline due to the administrative system in vogue in British Africa at the time when the book was written.) In his conclusion, Lord Kinross makes this instructive remark, which must certainly have remained unheeded by the "Establishment"; "The European need not be it Fascist to bring up the African in the way he should go. But equally he need not be a sentimental Liberal."

The Earl of Winterton, in *Orders of The Day* (Chap. XXIV), has also and more recently expressed his doubts about the kind of life the British mania for democratic institutions has at last established in

England itself. For in language both moderate and sober he speaks of the increasing "difficulties of every British Government answerable to a nation enjoying universal suffrage, especially since a large portion of the electorate is imperfectly fitted to understand either the doctrine or the heresy of the moment."

As that exceptionally shrewd statesman, Joseph Chamberlain once said to A. J. Balfour, long before universal epicene suffrage had been granted (i.e. 1866): "Our misfortune is that we live under a system of government originally contrived to check the action of kings and ministers, and which meddles far too much with the executive of the country." (*Chapters of Autobiography*, by A. J. Balfour, Chap. XV). But had Chamberlain been expressing these views in this Age of universal epicene suffrage, he would certainly have said, not "meddles far too much", but "meddles far too much and far too ignorantly and emotionally" with the executive of the country.

It never seems to occur to those who believe in this system of democratic control by an epicene electorate composed of all the adults in the nation, how fundamentally unfair, if not actually inhuman, it is to leave momentous decisions of State policy likely to determine the destiny of the voters themselves and of their posterity, to mobs qualified to form prudent, let alone wise, judgments about the issues placed before them. Can it be charitable to call upon people ill equipped and unused to taking a long-term view of legislative measures affecting their political and social life, to frame and implement policies of which they cannot understand or even gauge the consequences? This merciless aspect of Democracy seems altogether to have escaped the attention of all its most ardent advocates.

In the matter of the people's character alone, is there anyone who would be prepared to say that, since the various extensions of the Franchise granted from 1918 onwards, it has improved? Is there not, on the contrary, every indication that it has seriously deteriorated? And would it be fair to blame the electorate themselves for having acquiesced in, if not for having actually promoted, the policies which, in hardly two generations, have destroyed their spirit of independence, undermined their rudimentary Public Spirit, ruined their self-discipline and the discipline of their children, and encouraged every kind of self-indulgence, sexual and otherwise, among them? (See Chapter X *ante*.)

It is true that many of these regrettable changes have been due to other agencies than the influence of mob-majorities on legislation; and among these other agencies has been of course the prolonged absence

in English life of a Tone-Setting *élite*. But this in itself is one of the many untoward results of Liberal misunderstandings concerning the nature of sound government.

As to the policy of spreading this system far and wide, despite the fact that it has proved damaging in its native home, the Earl of Winterton says: "If there is a lesson to be learnt from world events of the last 25 years, it is that democratic government simply does not function in a country where there is an illiterate electorate, which has no understanding of democracy and where power falls into the hands of a tiny class of semi-educated agitators. . . .Ignoring these considerations and without sufficient preparatory steps, the Labour Government conferred self-government on the Gold Coast, and thus alarmed European opinion throughout Africa." (*Op. cit.*, Chap XXIII).

David Thomson is another political writer who bravely expresses his heterodox views in the teeth of the present-day members of the English "Establishment."

"Many of the political difficulties of our time", he says, in *Personality and Politics* (Chap. 1), "have been added to rather than solved by the increased number of people who have been allowed to take an active interest in politics." Whilst in Chap. VII, he says, the democrat "must in honesty admit that only a small portion of the electorate is sufficiently well-informed to judge politics on grounds of pure reason." Later on in the book he implies that even if the electorate consisted of wizards, this would not necessarily mean that wholly desirable men and women entered Parliament. "Even democratic election," he says, "means that politics tends to fall into the hands of the ambitious, and the ambitious tend to be either vain or unscrupulous." — Why not both? (*Op. cit.*, Chap III. i).

If, however, we turn to a foreign observer of the very same state of affairs which Lord Kinross, the Earl of Winterton and David Thomson criticize so adversely, we find the following summing up: "What we recognise as order to-day and express in Liberal institutions, is nothing but anarchy become a habit. We call it democracy, parliamentarianism, national government, but in fact it is the non-existence of conscious responsible authority — a government."

And who was this caustic and clear-sighted foreigner? — None other than Oswald Spengler, the author of the *Decline of the West*; and the passage in question occurs in his *Hour of Decision*.

XXVII: Psychological Myopia

One by one I have examined the many sophistries on which Liberal ideology is founded. Including its total rejection of the aristocratic solution of government, I have attempted to show how shallow and unrealistic it is.

I hope that I have also succeeded in revealing its fundamentally pessimistic and negative attitude. What is the explanation of its stubborn insistence on error; its addiction to forming wholly false assumptions regarding the passions, sentiments and motivations of ordinary human beings; its reliance on these fantastic assumptions for the very functioning of its institutions? How is it that, from its earliest beginnings in the Middle Ages, Liberalism has been stamped with this trumpery intellectualism? What can account for the fact that even in its foreign and least Anglo-Saxon champions — in men like Rousseau, Pecqueur, Beaumarchais, Condorcet, Voltaire etc.' — these same irrational features are equally conspicuous?

There are three possible and major explanations:

First and foremost, there is the hopelessly defective psychological flair which is one of the least engaging of Anglo-Saxon characteristics and has led to untold suffering and conflict in both the political and domestic life of England. The tendency to ascribe to ordinary mortals attributes, impulses, virtues and motivations which only a writer of fairy tales could foist upon them, seems to be endemic in England; and its prevalence could be illustrated by innumerable examples drawn not only from political treatises, but also, and with far more damaging consequences, from English poetry and fiction.

We have but to think of such instances as Wordsworth's misleading exaltation of children. Thomas Otway's extravagant and unrealistic tribute to Women, and Virginia Woolf's false view of the sexes in her silly novel *Orlando*. Whilst in books supposed to be more serious we have the preposterous glorification, to the point or caricature, of the common man, his virtues, impulses and intelligence, by men like Locke, Bentham, Godwin and Marchmont Needham; and those ridiculous panegyrics of women in John Stuart Mill's *Subjection of*

Women and Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*. In Continental literature there is no parallel to this sort of psychological blundering.

"To believe in democracy," said F. M. Cornford, "you must believe in the essential goodness of common humanity" (*The Unwritten Philosophy*, Chap. IV). English thinkers have never found it difficult to accept both of these beliefs. This matters not at all provided they are recognised as fanciful. But when, as too often happens, they are taken seriously and applied to politics, the consequences are disastrous. Strangely enough, although we find among English publicists and philosophers abundant evidence of this weakness for romancing in discussing the character of common men and women, when it comes to acknowledging the fact of superiority in certain individual human beings, especially that form of superiority which can command respect, loyalty and obedience, they display a settled pessimism which insists on negating its very possibility — at least in the government of mankind. And they much prefer to accept the view that Aristocracy has failed because of the intrinsic shortcomings of the institution itself, than because of the natural iniquity of Man, which, *when proper safeguards are lacking*, can be guaranteed to make havoc of any institution whatsoever.

The reader may feel that the acceptance by such Frenchmen as I have enumerated, of the Anglo-Saxon fancies which make democracy seem a plausible governmental system, rather conflicts with an implicit charge of psychological myopia against Anglo-Saxons in particular.

Truth to tell, however, this anomaly is only apparent; for, apart from the many inconsistencies to be found in the French Liberal philosophers — Rousseau's advocacy of Aristocracy for instance — we must remember that what so deeply impressed the French, even a man as shrewd as Voltaire, and inclined them blindly to accept England's political institutions, the excellence of which incidentally, as Montesquieu himself admits (*L'Esprit des Lois*, Livre XI, Chap. VI), was taken for granted rather than subjected to any careful scrutiny, was not so much the condition of England at the time of their visit, but England's immense success as a trading and commercial nation; her fabulous wealth, and the bottomless till from which she drew the subsidies she needed for her various allies in her struggle for ascendancy.

Dazzled by these brilliant material achievements, which the European world with its vulgar Roman traditions found it difficult to resist, it is perhaps not surprising that many French thinkers, with

their psychological flair momentarily numbed, assumed that where such phenomenal material success was to be found, political wisdom and sound political principles must of course accompany it.

Secondly, when over long periods the abuses of existing rulers tend to alienate even alert thinkers from the régime prevailing in their own day, there is always a tendency to swing over to hitherto untried, and superficially plausible innovations, if only as a release from past oppression. As Dr. David Thomson aptly remarks: "Popular vision of the desirably democratic society is usually based upon experience of alternative and less desirable forms of government." (*The Democratic Ideal in France and England*, Chap. I, ii). When moreover we remember that the more oppressive the existing régime may be, the less narrowly novel political alternatives are likely to be examined, it cannot surprise us that, throughout Europe, Democracy found its strongest support in aristocratic misrule. Liberalism thus understood, not as a spontaneous product of serious political reflection and wisdom, but as a more or less automatic reaction, loses much of its respectability as an ideology. For although we may allow for the compelling force of misery and oppression, the acceptance of the tenets of Liberalism even as an automatic reaction, demands a considerable amount of intellectual goodwill and complacency.

Thirdly, we have to reckon with common mankind's habit of always confusing the shortcomings of those running an institution with the faults of the institution itself. Instead of tracing the vices and grievous consequences of the aristocratic system of government to the crimes of the aristocrats themselves, even the most cultivated of the political reformers have generally tended to claim that they were specific to aristocratic institutions *per se*: whilst the Liberals, not only accepted this point of view unhesitatingly, but also placed to the score of Liberal virtues every defect recorded of aristocratic rule. When we add to this catalogue of errors, the fact that both the reforming political philosophers, their Liberal converts and even the degenerate aristocrats as a body failed to appreciate that one of the most essential of governmental functions is the Setting of a decent Tone in a community, providing the pattern and model of a good and dignified Way of Life which the masses, high and low, can emulate; and that for reasons already adduced only an Aristocracy can perform this function, it cannot surprise us that Liberalism appeared to be the only political ideology that could meet the requirements of modern Europe.

It is true that the gross errors of judgment and insight on which this conclusion rested, can hardly be attributed to men as shrewd as your Laskis, Lenins, Trotskys and Stalins. But these men had other axes to grind, which made it both prudent and tactically advisable to pretend what less enlightened adversaries of Aristocracy genuinely believed. We may, however, safely ascribe the obtuseness necessary for this misunderstanding to men like Paine, Godwin, and the majority of English Liberals, Socialists and Labour politicians, together with most of the French revolutionaries of the late eighteenth century.

It was this error in political reasoning that I hoped to expose in this short treatise, and the fact that well-known believers in Democracy — men like Sir Fred Clarke, Dr. F. C. Happold, T. S. Eliot, Middleton Murry, and Professors Alfred Weber, Wilhelm Röpke and Karl Mannheim have recently declared themselves advocates of a revival of aristocracy, is the best testimony I can offer in support of my thesis. (For the documentation relating to this testimony, see my *Quest of Human Quality*, Chap. III.)

It is true that this group of political thinkers clothe their demand for a revival of Aristocracy in language least likely to offend modern sensibilities. They speak, for instance, only of "*élites*", and of the urgent need of producing and rearing new generations of such beings. But their meaning and intention are plain enough, and he who can read between the lines of their cautiously worded appeals, easily infers that they are really recommending a Revival of Aristocracy.

XXVIII: Fornication Without Tears

That the consequences of the psychological error of regarding Man as fundamentally good should have been particularly severe in England and America, may be due to the fact that nowhere else are the romantic doctrines of the Liberal Faith so dominant and so hopelessly aggravated by the vicious practice of making bad laws out of hard cases.

Particularly noticeable is the damage resultant from the widespread relaxation of discipline and above all self-discipline, and the blindly benevolent legislation which in the last hundred or so years has marked the social life of these two countries even if we confine our survey to the effects of such measures as have provided assistance to unmarried mothers and thus diminished the need of any sense of responsibility or obligation on the part of sexually uncontrolled women and their male partners; or to the effects of succouring deserted wives, and subsidising families of children exceeding one child — let alone all the compulsory charities which come under the head of "Public Assistance", we should find ample evidence of the character deterioration which has already occurred.

Apart from the amount of fraud, self-indulgence and sloth which this kind of Liberal legislation has promoted, what seems generally to be overlooked is its twofold effect in character deteriorisation and in penalising the more industrious, thrifty, responsible and self-reliant members of the population for the sake of the indolent, profligate, unscrupulous and least disciplined.

To behold in any of our cities or towns, as we now too often do, a young and able-bodied man, decently attired and evidently leisured, walking along the main street at eleven in the morning accompanied by a wife, a perambulator brimming over with babies, and leading a string of small children by the hand — to behold such a spectacle I say, may have become such a commonplace as to have ceased to cause surprise or give offence. But wherever it may be taken for granted in this way, it is usually because the average citizen is either too careless, or else too ill-informed politically, to be aware of the social history of his country and to recognise the ultimate source of the financial

obligations discharged by that anonymous and mystical entity known as the "Government". For, unless the young able-bodied man in question is actually on holiday, he is one of those new idle rich whose procreative zeal has relieved him of any need to work for his living.

On Sunday, May 8th 1960, for instance, the *Sunday Express* reported a typical case of this sort. "A 29-year-old Glasgow labourer," it said, "has discovered a simple pleasant way to live without working. He and his wife have combined to produce 3 successive sets of twins as well as four other children." For this "an appreciative country pays them £12 a week. So he says quite reasonably that he would be silly to take a job at less than £13 a week. And as no one will pay him that wage he doesn't work and hasn't worked for five years."

Similarly, the *Daily Mail*, on the 2nd of September 1959 reported the case of one, Jesse Gamble, a man of 45 and father of 14 children.

Whenever he was "offered a job", wrote the *Daily Mail* reporter, "he turned it down. For . . . he felt he had no need to work. He drew £8 a week from the National Assistance, £4 18s. in Family Allowances, and £3 from his working children a total of £15 18s. a week."

In the same newspaper on Nov. 15th 1963 we read of a man of 22, Peter Blackman by name, who took three months holiday at Cannes while he was on National Assistance. He had not been working since January of that year and was drawing £4 15s. a week assistance. By July he had saved so much he was able to take the Mediterranean holiday in question.

Nor are these cases at all exceptional. Similar abuses of the compulsory charities now extorted from the responsible, thrifty and industrious elements in the population are reported almost daily. What with family allowances, the lump sums granted to parturients, and the provision made for unmarried mothers, we now have, to the astonishment of people uninfected with the Liberal virus, inaugurated an era which, in spite of England's population threatening to grow by 20,000,000 over the next 50 years, has made procreation a lucrative pastime and given us the blessings of Fornication Without Tears.

Only mental defectives could have assumed that the legislative measures leading to all these abuses could fail to be exploited. For it is not as if the masses, high and low, had been, like distinguished captives, placed on parole not to take a mean advantage of the privileges granted them. All the benefits enumerated were showered upon them unconditionally, and their deplorable abuse of the naïve belief in the fundamental goodness of Man was therefore only to be expected.

The burden of these abuses borne by the better elements in the nation is not however their most serious aspect. More disastrous by far is their effect on the character of the people. By giving the populace the chance of profiting by the wholly gratuitous belief in their native honour and public spirit, a habit of cynicism has insensibly been cultivated in the nation, and as cynicism is never far removed from unscrupulousness and criminality, only a safe opportunity is needed in order quickly to make it assume these more sinister guises.

According to Sir Henry Maine, this by no means exhausts the untoward effects of Liberal doctrine; for he maintains that even intelligence is adversely affected by the tendency democratic institutions have of promoting the habit of forming snap judgments, of taking for granted one's ability to hold opinions on every possible question, no matter how abstruse, and of assenting to policies inadequately understood and only superficially pondered. "Useful as it is to democracies," he says, "this levity of assent is one of the most enervating of national habits of mind. It has seriously enfeebled the French intellect. It is most injuriously affecting the mind of England . . . it threatens little short of ruin to the awakening intellect of India." (*Popular Government*, Essay II).

As far as the decline of intelligence in England is concerned, the evidence given by Walter P. Pitkin. Dr. A. Carrel, Sir Cyril Burt, the Royal Commission on Population (May 1950), Sir Godfrey Thompson, Prof. R. A. Fisher and Drs. E. O. Lewis and J. A. Fraser, is conclusive and certainly confirms Sir Henry Maine's allegation made 80 years ago. (On this whole question, see Chap. V., Sect. 33 of my *Quest of Human Quality*.)

I am given to understand that in the United States of America, where the same kind of compulsory charities are established, they are leading to the same abuses, and on such a vast scale that many States are becoming embarrassed by the financial burden they impose.

In California in particular, the Welfare Provisions Programme is being so consistently exploited by the improvident, the lazy, and the unskilled, that the Authorities are at their wits' end. In this State, where the unemployment benefit is as high as 26 dollars a week and where only a five-year residential requirement entitles all newcomers to the largesse recklessly distributed by the Administration, a woman receives 50 dollars a month for every illegitimate child she bears, and many unmarried women are collecting as much as 500 dollars a month by this means alone.

Rebuked by a Social Welfare visitor for her lack of restraint in this respect, one of these female beneficiaries exclaimed indignantly: "I ain't no iron woman! "

But the worst racket of all is connected with the provision for so-called "Deserted Wives." Hundreds of these women are really not abandoned at all and carry on clandestine relations with husbands who continue to cohabit with them in secret. In San Francisco where a raid was carried out to catch some of these couples red-handed, in 19 out of 21 homes the alleged "absconded" husband was found in bed with his deserted wife. In San Diego, owing to the provision made for three or four days sick-leave for all workers every month, most of the workers, whether sick or not, take these days off as a matter of course and draw the prescribed compensation.

XXIX: The Universal Ache of Envy

In addition to those causes of the trouble already considered, there are two important factors at the root of much of the unscrupulous and mischievous benevolence and charity now prevailing in modern Anglo-Saxon societies, which are often overlooked, and to one of which I believe I am the first to have called attention. They are:

The vicious principle of Party Politics, which inevitably induces political Parties contending for Office and Power at every General Election, to outbid each other in bribing the Electorate, and to refrain from framing or proposing any measures which, however urgently they may be needed for the good of the nation, would prove unpopular with the masses. It is difficult to see how these two abuses of modern Anglo-Saxon Democracy can be avoided, as their causes lie more in the natural iniquity of Man than in the nature of the political system itself. Given the insensate and vicious system, it is impossible to abolish them. This has of course been noticed by other critics of Democracy. Lord Vansittart, for instance, in 1958, declared that "Our elections have become auctions where the best bidders win." (*The Mist Procession*, Chap XIX); and Dean Inge, six years earlier, had maintained that "Democracy stands revealed as Government by mass bribery." (*Hibbert Journal*, July 1952).

Less obvious, but equally undeniable, however, is the second important factor contributing to the exercise of indiscriminate and mischievous benevolence and charity; and that is, as I believe I am the first to have pointed out, the decisive rôle played by the harassing ache of Envy in prompting what Hallam in his *Constitutional History* termed "the blind eleemosynary spirit." It turns on the secret but almost automatic psychological processes which in people not too clear concerning the motivation of their conduct culminate in compassion and ill-considered benevolent action.

One or two of the more penetrating students of mankind — Nietzsche above all — are known to have harboured suspicions that all was not as above-board, self-evident and praiseworthy as many moralists assumed in the emotion Pity and the action it prompts.

He even pointed out that, in view of the ignominious features that may often cling to if, it was far from being as laudable as is generally believed. And he thus incurred much bitter criticism in almost every quarter of the civilised West.

Unfortunately he never saw clearly, or explained precisely, how and why the conduct prompted by Pity could be and often is ignominious. Indeed, there is no passage in all his works which indicates that he was himself fully aware of the shameful aspects of the conduct Pity often prompted — its "*partie honteuse.*"

Had he given the matter a little more thought, however, and reached even Schopenhauer's degree of clarity about it, he would inevitably have lighted on the gravamen of the charge that can be made against this much admired emotion; and his failure to do so, together with his equally serious oversight concerning Socrates, constitute the two major blemishes which in my opinion mar his philosophical outlook.

What then is this "*partie honteuse*" in Pity which he failed to discern?

It is the intimate relation which, in most ordinary people's minds — I speak of people not accustomed to be lucid concerning the nature of their feelings and the motivations of their conduct — exists between Pity and Envy. Because, wherever Envy is widespread, people's peace of mind is naturally disturbed by the spectacle of any marked superiority — whether of health, wealth, personal gifts or merely situation — in a neighbour. Thus, Samuel Johnson, in his *Life of Waller* two centuries ago, spoke of "That natural jealousy which makes every man unwilling to allow much excellence in another."

But what brings most relief to the ache of Envy? — Obviously, the spectacle of any inferior plight, any misfortune, in a neighbour! Every calamity assailing a human being necessarily appeases the ache of Envy. Nor is this all there is to it.

For the whole gamut of this feeling of relief does not end there. In people not too clear about their mental processes, the sense of relief from Envy may insensibly prompt spontaneous feelings of gratification which incite to acts of generosity, and it often does so. They are ready, if not eager to display this half-conscious gratification by indulging in various kinds of indiscriminate and therefore often mischievous benevolence. The fact that the contemplation of a criminal in the dock, even if he happens to be a murderer, may in some people afford them such relief from Envy as to provoke obscure feelings of benevolence for him and make them forget his victim or victims, shows how

unreasoning this kind of charity can be. This of course does not apply to cases where the misery contemplated happens to be that of a person dearly loved. Then, and only then, there is no accompanying feeling of relief from Envy, there is only grief and despair.

The necessary corollary to all this would then be that where much evidence of impulsive and indiscriminate benevolence and charity prevails, widespread Envy may be suspected in the population.

Do conditions in modern England bear this out? — There is in England to-day abundant evidence, not only of Envy and of the evil consequences of mischievous and indiscriminate benevolence, but also of a passion for concentrating attention on human inferiority and defectiveness and for bending all effort on favouring it even at the cost of the desirable and sound elements in the population.

As Ruskin remarked about a hundred years ago, "Benevolent persons are always by preference busy on the essentially bad, and exhaust themselves in efforts to get maximum intellect from cretins and maximum virtue from criminals." (*Fors Clavigera*, Letter IX. Sept. 1871).

Yes, of course! That is precisely what we should expect them to do! Because they are naturally drawn to what relieves the pangs of Envy! In the same letter, on a previous page, Ruskin, already aware a century ago of the harm that was done to a population by indiscriminate charity, especially of the kind that concentrates on the least promising and desirable elements in the population, declared, "The right law of it is that you are to take most pains with the best material . . . never waste pains on bad ground."

Yes! But Ruskin, though obviously sound in his understanding of what conduct in this respect was commendable, did not probe the matter deeply enough to discover what induced the average person of the West, never too clearly aware of the precise nature of his motivations, to prefer being "busy on the essentially bad." Had he for one moment recognised the psychological reflexes accompanying Envy, had he even remembered what Samuel Johnson, a century before the *Fors Clavigera* letters were written, had said on Envy, he would have had a better understanding of the evil he described so correctly in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

When therefore we behold all the unwise and reckless benevolence and charity which in modern England is now undermining the will to work in the masses, and converting our prisons into second-rate boarding houses; when we see about us all the inevitable results of

the concessions that have been made to popular self-indulgence and lack of self-restraint — the beginnings of which Ruskin clearly saw and which, as a speaker at the annual Conference of the Scottish Conservatives said, "Strikes at the character of our people and should be held responsible for the lack of parental control, the lowering of moral values and the increase of crime" (*Times*, 22.4.65) — when, I say, we recognise this state of affairs and observe how it discourages public spirit, responsibility and self-reliance in the population, are we entitled to infer that Envy must be rampant in England?

— It would appear to be the only conclusion possible. We have but to think of the endless spiral of wages which threatens to ruin our economy; the proverbial and universal passion to "keep up with the Jones's," and the way in which the incessant quarrels over so-called "differentials" repeatedly holds up industry and impedes production.

Regarding the very question of "Differentials" Baroness Wootton of Abinger remarked ten years ago: "It's twelve letters are an epitome of the acquisitive, competitive, hierarchical, envious nature of the Society in which we live." (*Hibbert Journal*, Jan. 1956).

Eight years before this statement was made, T. S. Eliot had declared that what caused the prevalence of envy in the population was "the disintegration of class" (*Notes Towards The Definition of Culture*, Chap. VI), by which he meant, I presume, the basing of the social hierarchy merely on differences of wealth.

Yet another famous poet had many years previously recognised the decisive rôle played by Envy in the sphere of politics and social reform: for early in the nineteenth century Tennyson had written:

"Envy wears the mask of love, and laughing
Sober facts to scorn,
Cries to weakest as to strongest
Ye are equals, equals born "

Another society which, like the modern English, measured worthiness chiefly according to possessions — I mean the ancient Romans — was so vulgar as to know of only one way of assessing even aristocratic and social superiority of any kind whatsoever, and that was by merely ascertaining, not what a man was, but how much he owned.

And they were certainly the most envious among the nations of their day. Their literature testifies abundantly to this fact and Seneca,

one of their most eminent thinkers, maintained in *de ira*, that "None can be happy while racked with envy of one happier."

"They were not indiscriminately benevolent!" — No! But they appeased their envy by watching the victims of their cruelty in the arena, and with free bread and circuses they certainly started the practice of Public Assistance.

The inevitable outcome of the form this attitude of mind takes in our Western civilisation is that it leads to the danger, recognised by Ruskin, that people become inclined to devote excessive interest and attention to those of their fellow creatures whose plight provokes pity. And on the extent to which this sentiment relieves their ache of envy, will depend the benevolence it inspires.

Consequently, it is not improbable that the largely unconscious promptings to unwise charity which incessantly operate to day throughout the Western World and particularly in England and America, to undermine the moral fibre and independent character of the masses, are but a further instance of the general lack of psychological insight which, as we have seen, is the peculiar infirmity of all Liberal societies.

In his *English Social History* (Chap. VI), G. M. Trevelyan maintains that, in the late sixteenth century Envy still exerted no influence on English life, and it seems as if this halcyon condition endured until the dawn of our Capitalistic Civilisation, for Pope, in the early thirties of the eighteenth century still confined if to "the ignoble mind" alone (*Essay on Man*, Epistle II); whilst sixty years later Isaac Disraeli, in the *Literary Character*, was already calling attention to the Envy which even members of the nobility sometimes felt for the literary man. As I have myself had some unpleasant experiences of this kind of envy, I am able to vouch for the accuracy of Disraeli's remarks about it.

It can, however, hardly have failed to strike any observant student of modern life, that Envy is now among the most powerful and prevalent passions of Western society; and no one who sets out to investigate the deeper causes of much of the ill-judged and detrimental benevolence that prevails to-day, can hope to acquire a clear understanding of it unless he takes into account the factor I have described as the relief of the ache of envy that is obtained by the contemplation of any inferior human situation.

Let him follow to its logical conclusion the fact that Pity is easier than Envy, and he cannot fail to recognise how, in impulsive and largely unconscious people it may lead to unwise charity.

It would be quite unfair to hold the masses, whether of England or America, responsible for all these outrageous breaches of Public Spirit; for it is just as unreasonable to expect ordinary human beings to resist opportunities for personal profit which are foisted upon them by governments labouring under a false estimate of human nature, as it is to blame the populations of the West for the anarchy which resulted from their inability to distinguish sharply between Licence and the "Freedom" which they are constantly told constitutes their superiority over less fortunate nations. Equally mistaken, as I have already maintained, is the tendency to charge the epicene electorate with the errors of any past legislation which may have proved injurious to themselves, their country and their future. For how can an ill-informed majority of epicene voters be expected to foresee the remote effect on themselves and posterity of measures they have been induced by competing demagogues to approve? Even if they were capable of always taking a long-term view of the policies submitted to their judgment, such prescience would be beyond their powers. Crowds of ordinary people are not usually able or accustomed to take long-term views of changes they are called upon to sanction.

The palpable nonsense of one man one vote, of majority rights, and of the unilateral power of only a third of the Parliamentary triune originally envisaged by the English Constitution, coupled with the demagogic methods by which members of the Commons now reach their seats in the House, cannot be attributed to any deliberate or concerted action on the part of the populace themselves. But the worst misapprehension of all is to suppose that all this Liberal misunderstanding of human nature can possibly fail in the end to pervert and corrupt the nation and wipe out all the accumulated treasure in virtue and sanity which has been fostered and stored during former, more rational and more tasteful times.

Speaking of Capitalistic Civilisation, the Rev. V. A. Demant maintains and I think with justice, that "the whole development was a productive and commercial success as long as it rested upon a pre-capitalist layer which it eventually ate too far into to survive." (*Religion and the Decline of Capitalism*, Chap. IV).

On the same principle it is probable that the Civilisation of Liberalism may be said to be still resting on human qualities cultivated in bygone times and is likely to survive only so long as this store of virtue and ability remains not wholly corrupted and frittered away.

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Made in the USA
San Bernardino, CA
01 December 2015

First published as a series of articles in *The South African Observer* in the 1960s, this work provides a fascinating historical-philosophical analysis of the origin of modern liberalism.

Starting with an analysis of what liberalism is, this book reviews the ideological origin—among the upper classes of society—of the notion of liberalism, and then moves through its historical development to the present day, where, he concludes, the "worst misapprehension of all is to suppose that all this Liberal misunderstanding of human nature can possibly fail in the end to pervert and corrupt the nation and wipe out all the accumulated treasure in virtue and sanity which has been fostered and stored during former, more rational and more tasteful times."

As the author says in the preface:

> "Among the many remarkable changes witnessed in my lifetime, none has struck me more forcibly than that which has occurred in the relative importance of Religion and Politics.
>
> "For, whereas in my childhood and youth religion was still the principal field where fervour and fanaticism reigned, it has been my fate to see political doctrines and ideologies completely supersede it in all adult minds.
>
> "In my youth there was certainly hostility and rivalry between Liberals and Conservatives; but however bitter the antagonism, it never went to the length of branding the other side as "indecent", "disreputable" or actually "despicable". Yet to-day Liberalism has attained to this height of arrogance and presumption.
>
> "This book is therefore an attempt in this eleventh hour of expiring sanity to expose (he false assumptions and truculent vacuity of these very tenets and principle to outline a constructive means of combating them.

Anthony Mario Ludovici (1882–1971) was born in London, En Educated privately, his high intelligence allowed him to b fluent in several languages, and he was a leading philos sociologist, and author.

Ostara Publications
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ISBN 9781507826287
O8-DBO-003
9 781507 826287